

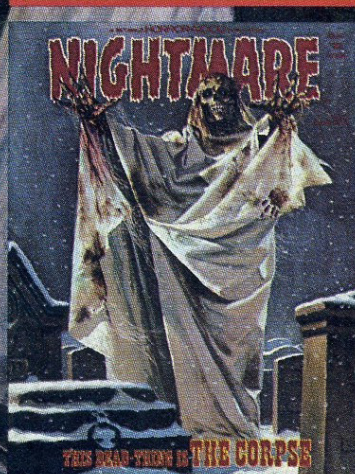
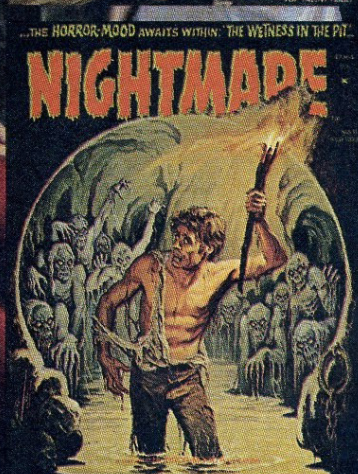
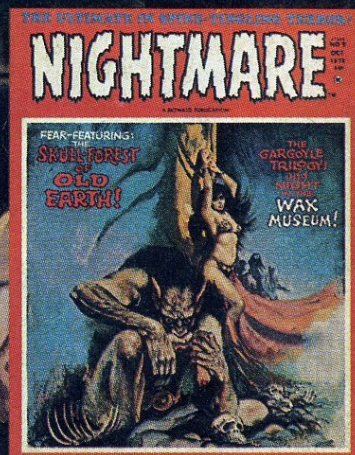
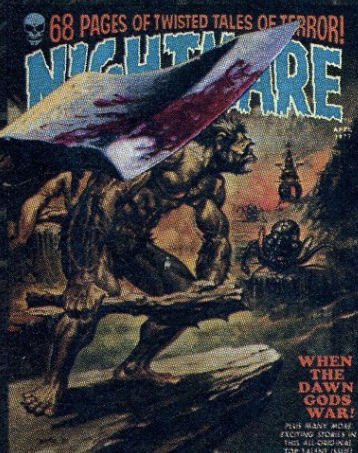
# THE 1974 NIGHTMARE YEARBOOK



75¢

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**THE BEST TALES OF**  
**VAMPIRES WEREWOLVES AND GHOULS**  
**IN ILLUSTRATED HORROR!**

**A SKYWALD HORROR-MOOD PUBLICATION**



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A SKYWALD HORROR-MOOD MAGAZINE  
**MACABRE COLLECTOR'S ISSUE**  
**NIGHTMARE**  
**YEARBOOK**

• edited by ALAN HEWETSON •

1974

cover artist: SEGRELLES

contributors:

LEN BROWN MAELO CINTRON

DENNIS FUJITAKE CARLOS GARZON BRUCE JONES

BOB MARTIN DOUG MOENCH RALPH REESE

JERRY SEIGEL TOM SUTTON DOUG WILDEY

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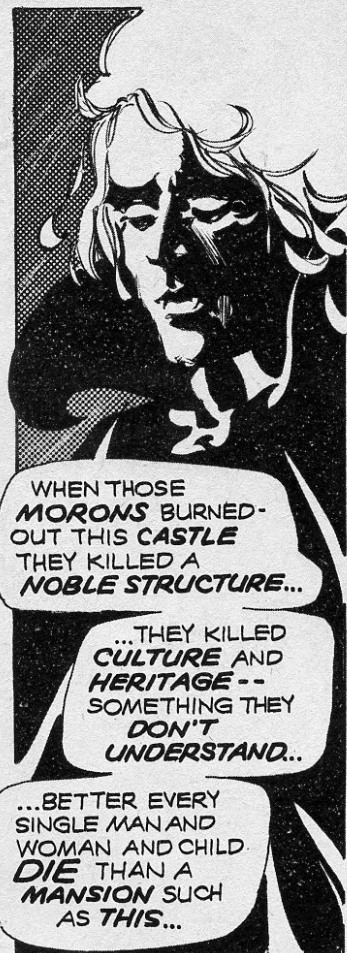




WRITTEN BY ALAN HEWETSON  
ILLUSTRATED BY BOB MARTIN



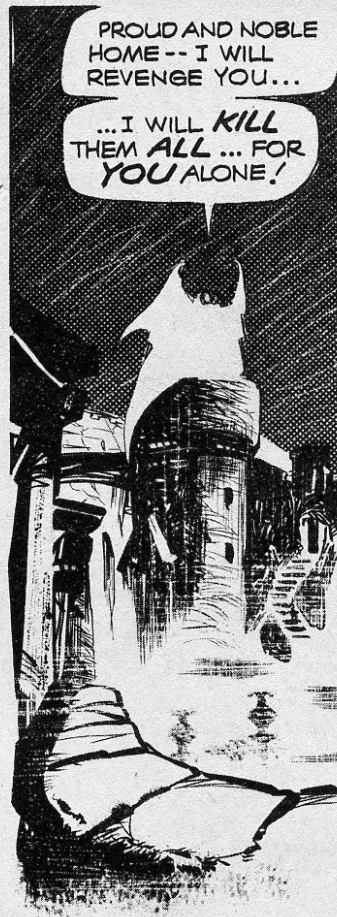




WHEN THOSE  
**MORONS** BURNED-  
OUT THIS CASTLE  
THEY KILLED A  
**NOBLE STRUCTURE...**

...THEY KILLED  
**CULTURE** AND  
**HERITAGE**--  
SOMETHING THEY  
**DON'T**  
**UNDERSTAND...**

...BETTER EVERY  
SINGLE MAN AND  
WOMAN AND CHILD  
**DIE** THAN A  
**MANSION** SUCH  
AS THIS...



PROUD AND NOBLE  
HOME-- I WILL  
REVENGE YOU...

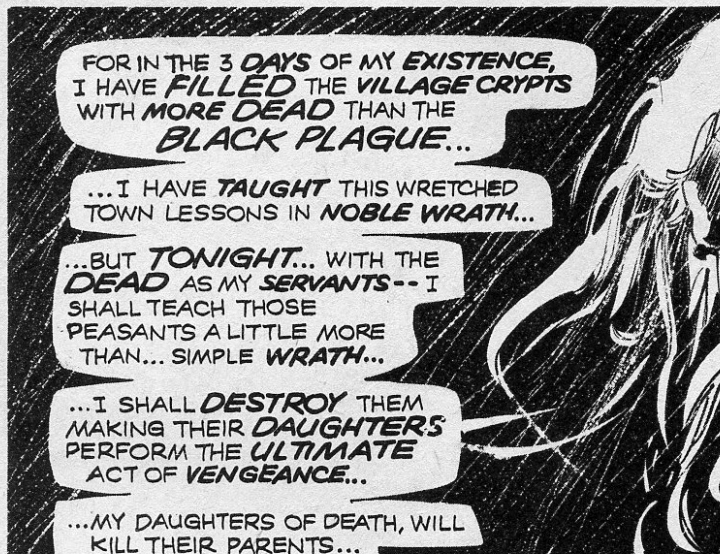
...I WILL **KILL**  
THEM **ALL** ... FOR  
**YOU ALONE!**



I HAVE BEEN **ALIVE**  
BUT 4 DAYS, A  
**VAMPIRE** BUT 3 DAYS...

...THE **FIRST** MALE  
VAMPIRE OF ALL  
EARTH OF ALL TIME...

...AND I SHALL **USE**  
MY POWERS TO  
**DESTROY** MY  
ENEMIES...



FOR IN THE 3 **DAYS** OF MY **EXISTENCE**,  
I HAVE **FILLED** THE **VILLAGE** CRYPTS  
WITH **MORE DEAD** THAN THE  
**BLACK PLAGUE...**

...I HAVE **TAUGHT** THIS WRETCHED  
TOWN LESSONS IN **NOBLE WRATH...**

...BUT **TONIGHT...** WITH THE  
**DEAD** AS MY **SERVANTS**-- I  
SHALL TEACH THOSE  
PEASANTS A LITTLE MORE  
THAN... SIMPLE **WRATH...**

...I SHALL **DESTROY** THEM  
MAKING THEIR **DAUGHTERS**  
PERFORM THE **ULTIMATE**  
ACT OF **VENGEANCE...**

...MY DAUGHTERS OF DEATH, WILL  
KILL THEIR PARENTS...

# THE GOD OF THE DEAD

MARTIN SAUNDERS





THESE GRAVES  
ONLY **DAYS** AGO DID  
NOT EVEN **EXIST...**

... RATHER  
**REMARKABLE**  
AND **PROFOUND**  
WHEN I THINK  
OF IT...

**RISE UP** MY  
DEAD THINGS...

... **RISE UP** AND  
**OUT** YOUR  
**MAUSOLEUMS...**  
YOUR **MASTER**  
**DEMANDS IT...**

TO THINK THAT  
I, LIKE A HUMAN  
SEED, CAN SPREAD  
MYSELF OVER ALL THE  
EARTH, AND CAN  
**POTENTIALLY ENSLAVE**  
**3 MILLION WOMEN,**  
MORE OR LESS...

... **REMARKABLE**  
AND **PROFOUND...**





COME TO ME NOW...MY BEAUTIFUL  
BEVY OF DEAD ONES...

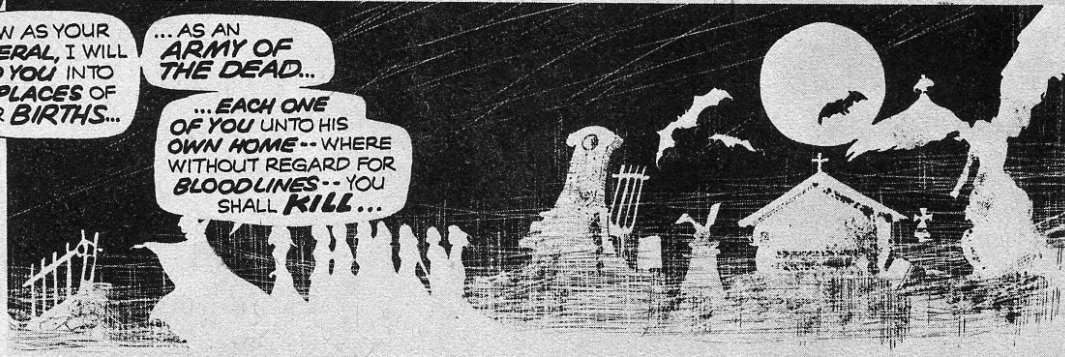
...COME  
TO MY  
ARMS...



NOW AS YOUR  
GENERAL, I WILL  
LEAD YOU INTO  
THE PLACES OF  
YOUR BIRTHS...

...AS AN  
ARMY OF  
THE DEAD...

...EACH ONE  
OF YOU UNTO HIS  
OWN HOME-- WHERE  
WITHOUT REGARD FOR  
BLOODLINES-- YOU  
SHALL KILL...



...HELLO  
FATHER...

E-EVANGELINE!!



...HELLO...





WHAT SORT OF **MONSTER** ARE YOU? YOU TAKE THE LIVES OF OUR **CHILDREN**, OUR MOST IMPORTANT REASON FOR BEING, AND WHEN WE **BURY** THEM YOU **DIG THEM** OUT OF THEIR **GRAVES** AND ENSLAVE THEM TO YOUR WRETCHED **WILL...**

CALM YOURSELF **BURGERMASTER...**

NOW **BRING** THEM TO ME, MY **CHILDREN...**

... BRING YOUR **HALF-DEAD, TORMENTED** PARENTS TO ME...

CALM MYSELF?

WHY SHOULD I **CALM MYSELF** WHEN YOU MEAN TO **MURDER** MY **VILLAGE--** WHEN YOU HAVE **ALREADY KILLED, BRUTALLY, ALL OUR CHILDREN!!**

THAT WAS QUITE A PRETTY LITTLE **SPEECH** **BURGERMASTER...**

SO... IT IS **ME** YOU TRY TO **IMPRESS--** WELL, YOU DON'T **IMPRESS** ME, YOU DON'T DENT MY ARMOUR IN ANY WAY...

...YOU DON'T EVEN **AMUSE** ME...

...BUT... YOU **WILL** AMUSE ME... YOU WILL CERTAINLY SERVE AT LEAST **ONE** PURPOSE!

...WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO **IMPRESS? ME?** OR YOUR '**FELLOW VILLAGERS?**' FOR **THEY**, IT IS OBVIOUS, ARE **NOT IMPRESSED** BY YOUR **MELODRAMATIC** PLEADING...

...**THEY...** IT IS OBVIOUS, ARE READY TO **LIE DOWN AND DIE**, OR AT THE **VERY LEAST, SUBJUGATE** THEMSELVES COMPLETELY TO ME...



THIS, I TAKE IT BURGERMASTER  
IS YOUR **FAMILY** SURROUNDING  
YOU...

...AND IS IT NOT ALSO **TRUE** THAT **THIS**  
GIRL ON MY **ARM**, WHOM YOU ONCE CALLED  
**MAGDELINE**, WHO IS **NOW** AN **UNDEAD**  
**SLAVE** TO ME, WHO IS **NOW** NO MORE A **PART**  
OF YOU OR AN **OFFSPRING** OF YOU THAN--  
THAN **I** AM... IS IT NOT **TRUE** YOU  
**FEAR** HER?

...FEAR HER?...  
**WHY** SHOULD I  
FEAR MY **OWN**  
DAUGHTER...

YOU **STILL** CLAIM  
HER AS YOUR **DAUGHTER**?  
WELL, YOU SHOULD FEAR HER  
FOR THE **SAME** REASON THE  
**OTHER** VILLAGERS NOW FEAR  
THEIR DEAD DAUGHTERS...

...BECAUSE--SHE IS MORE **DEAD**  
THAN **NOT**... MORE **EVIL** THAN **NOT**...  
MORE **GROTESQUERY** IS IN HER  
**HEART** NOW THAN YOU IN YOUR LIFE  
HAVE EVER **IMAGINED**...

**MAGDELINE--**  
DO YOU **KNOW**  
WHO **THIS** MAN  
**IS**?

...NO... I  
KNOW ONLY  
**YOU!**

**DAUGHTER!**

...OHO YOU OLD **FOOL**--  
YOU WILL ACCOMPLISH **NOTHING**  
BY **DEMEANING** YOURSELF  
**THIS**...

...KILL HIM GIRL...  
THEN **THIS WHOLE**  
**FAMILY**... DRAIN THEIR  
**VEINS DRY**... DO NOT  
LET THEM **CONTINUE**  
TO **BREATHE**... EVEN  
AS **UNDEADS**...

...**KILL THEM**...

MAGGY...  
I'M YOUR  
**FATHER**... DON'T  
YOU **KNOW**  
ME, LITTLE  
ONE...

...NO...









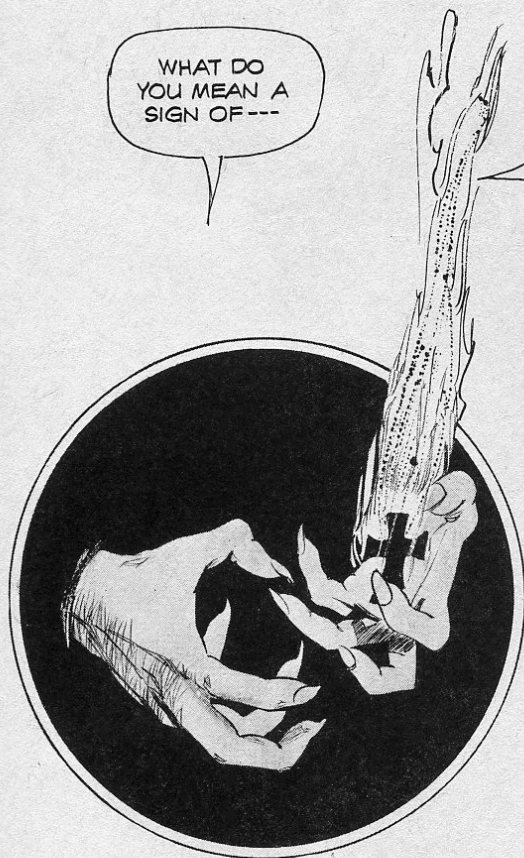
WHAT'S **WRONG**  
WITH YOU MISTER?  
WHY ARE YOU **DOING**  
THIS? DON'T YOU  
GO TO  
**CHURCH...**

**CHURCH?**  
HAHAHAHA --  
CHILD -- I AM A  
**GOD** MYSELF...

...A SIGN OF  
OUR CHURCH...

MAYBE MISTER  
...BUT HERE...

WHAT IS  
THIS?



WHAT DO  
YOU MEAN A  
SIGN OF---



**AHHHHH!!**



**AHHH  
AHHHHHHH**





... SUCH A  
LITTLE CROSS... I...  
DON'T SEE HOW IT  
CAN HAVE AN EFFECT  
SUCH AS THIS?... I...  
DON'T UNDERSTAND...



... **DRACULA DIES** AS ABRUPTLY AS HE WAS **BORN**, IN AN **INSTANT**...  
... IN AN **INSTANT** OF **EVIL** HE WAS **BORN**...  
... IN AN **INSTANT** OF **GOOD** HE **DIED**...

... IN AN ABRUPT, **CHAOTIC INSTANT** THE FORCES OF **GOOD**  
SLIPPED THROUGH **DRACULA'S EVIL DEFENCES**, BUT THO  
THE FORCES OF **GOOD** WERE **PHYSICALLY SMALL**  
THEY WERE **PHILOSOPHICALLY GREAT AND POWERFUL**...

... **SO**, WHAT NOW CAN BE SAID OF **THE GOD OF ALL THE DEAD**?--  
HIS **SUCCESSORS**, ALL THOSE WHO **CALL** THEMSELVES  
**DRACULA** BUT WHO, OF COURSE, **ARE NOT DRACULA**, WILL  
NEVER LIVE UP TO THE **CARNAGE AND DEATH** THE **TRUE**  
**PRINCE OF DARKNESS** PERFORMED WITHIN A MERE **FOUR**  
**DAYS**...

... **SO**, WITHOUT BEING FACETIOUS, DON'T BELIEVE ALL YOU READ  
DEAR READER... THE **DRACULA'S** YOU READ ARE NOT MERELY  
PHONIES, THEY ARE **INSIGNIFICANT** PHONIES--FOR THEIR  
'ADVENTURES' ARE **DULL-WITTED**, AND THEIR 'POWERS'  
ARE **LIMITED**...

... **THERE WAS ONLY ONE DRACULA, ONLY ONE PRINCE OF**  
**DARKNESS, A** CORRUPT SAD MONARCH NAMED **VLAD THE**  
**IMPALER, WHO** ROSE OUT OF HIS GRAVE TO BECOME THE  
**FATHER OF ALL VAMPIRES, WHO** LIVED A MISERABLE **FOUR**  
**DAYS** BEFORE HE WAS **CONQUERED BY A CHILD**...

**A** CHILD WHO DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHAT HE WAS DOING...







# THE SAGA OF THE HUMAN GARGOYLES

THE ILLUSTRATED  
HORROR MASTERPIECE  
BY

ARCHAIC **ALAN HEWETSON**

MACABRE **MAELO CINTRON**

Returning to the HORROR-MOOD pages after an absence of a few issues, due to sickness (the artist Cintron, was in an Asylum!) THE HUMAN GARGOYLES is again capturing the hearts of readers and critics alike! Often hailed as the single most important character - series in the entire HORROR-MOOD, THE HUMAN GARGOYLES are here to stay.

This month (on sale now) they appear in

## PSYCHO

(due to NIGHTMARE being a SPECIAL YEARBOOK this month) next month, THE HUMAN GARGOYLES return to

## NIGHTMARE

August - on sale June 27 - miss 'em not —

— and eagerly await the special cover story coming up soon —



# DRACULA is alive (?) AND Evil IN THIS 1974 NIGHTMARE YEAR BOOK

This is the NIGHTMARE YEAR-BOOK, featuring oddly gathered goodies from the first 6 issues of PSYCHO and NIGHTMARE, plus an all-new, all-original tale of horror by brand-new Horror-Mood-team artist Bob Martin — DRACULA — GOD OF THE DEAD!

Emotionally-disturbed ED FEDORY is presently working on some of the most bizarre tales of his career — like WHO ARE THEY? THE BREEDERS, to be illustrated by LUIS COLLADO, and THE CLAWS OF DEATH, to be illustrated by new, weird Spanish CARRERIZO — both will appear soon in the HORROR-MOOD pages!

Mr. awkward AUGUSTINE FUNNELL, meanwhile, is busy on his terror-tales: WHEN I WAS A BOY I WATCHED THE BLOOD WOLVES, and DUNGEON OF THE DAMNED, both to be illustrated by popular HORROR-MOOD illustrator, LURID LUIS COLLADO. Funnell's tale: DOWN TO HADES TO DIE! will be illustrated by another new Mood-team artist PUIGAGUT, an artist as interesting as his lunatic name!

ARCHAIC AL, besides archaic editorial duties, is drafting a few tales of suspense for your horror-entertainment — like: KILL, KILL, KILL AND KILL AGAIN, to be illustrated by FERRAN SOSTRES and THE MUMMY KHAFRE, a brand new character planned for the first issue of TOMB OF HORROR, and to be illustrated by CESAR LOPEZ, the artist for our now-regular FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER saga!

... strange correspondence from beyond the grave (it would seem), sent to us by GARY ANDERSON of Tulsa, Oklahoma — "I recently read Nightmare #18 and I found that one of my descendants, Chris Roose wrote a letter to your magazine. Yes,

I did say one of MY descendants. You see my life didn't actually end in 1849, in fact it was my birth into a new life. In reality, to put it in a word, I was reincarnated! But not as a dog, cat, horse, or another lowly beast. In a way I was lucky, I was reincarnated as a person, so I can do further writings. With my second life I'm going to try to do everything I couldn't in my first, and I wish to thank you people at Skywald Publishing for making me feel that my first life wasn't a total waste after all by printing some of my writings, even if you do change them a bit. I already had one of my first works of my second life printed in one of your magazines — it appeared in the 1973 Nightmare Winter Special — I was winner number 8 of your gargoyle egg contest. I signed it Gary W. Anderson, which is the name

people call my second embodiment. I'll be writing to you again sometime but for now my thanks for your great work on my behalf.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Writing under the hand of  
GARY W. ANDERSON

Drop us a line and let us know how you enjoyed this NIGHTMARE YEARBOOK — fill in the little coupon so we know which is your favorite story — so we can aim to please you in the future! And (lest we forget) don't forget to check the HORROR-MOOD newstands for

my favorite story this issue is :

comment :

name : age :

address :

city n' other :

mail to : SKYWALD BEST STORY  
Skywald Publishing Corporation  
18 East 41st Street Rm 1501  
New York City, N.Y. 10017

PSYCHO #20 and SCREAM  
#7 now on sale.

R.I.P.

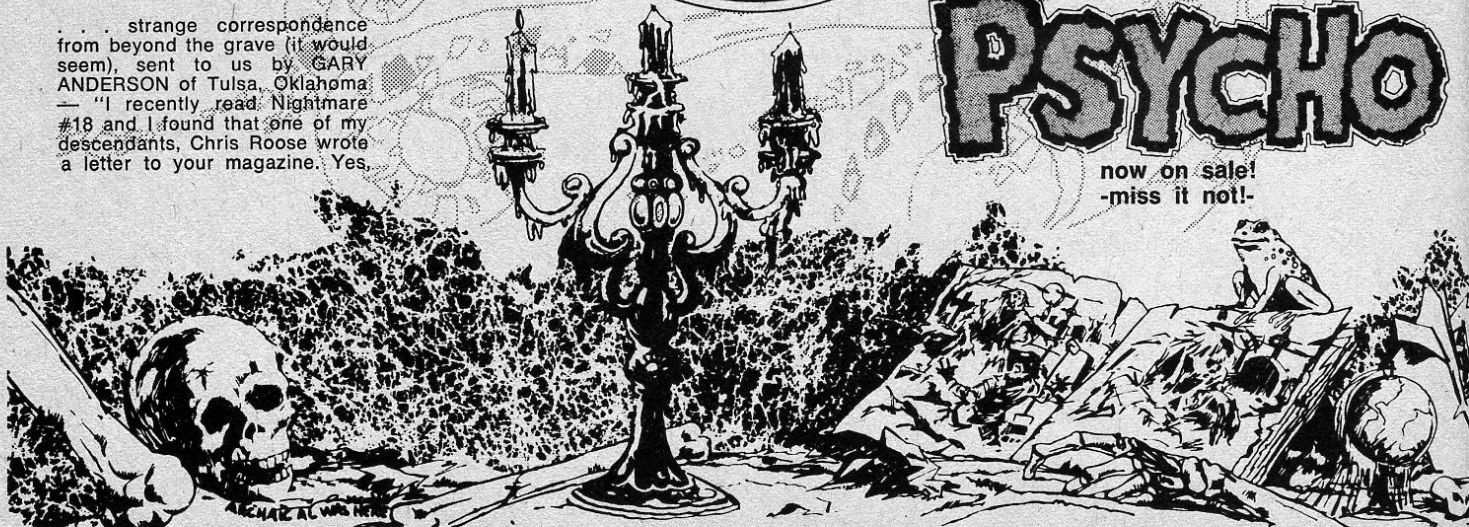
ARCHAICAL

THE  
HUMAN  
GARGOYLES

appear in

PSYCHO

now on sale!  
-miss it not!-





...SHE HAD BEEN SEIZED BY EPILEPSY  
AND HAD FAINTED-DEAD IN THE SIGHT  
OF THE SERVANT-GIRL...

...WE BURIED BERENICE  
IN THE FAMILY PLOT IN  
THE CASTLE GROUNDS  
THE FOLLOWING DAY...

...I THEN WENT  
TO THE LIBRARY--  
AND DID NOT LEAVE  
FOR SEVERAL DAYS...  
ALL THE TIME I  
MERELY THOUGHT OF  
HER...AND OF HER TEETH...  
OF HER TEETH THAT  
POSSESSED ME...



# BERENICE

is in

# SCREAM

The masterpiece of Horror by ED-  
GAR ALLAN POE  
is now on sale at your horror-mood  
newsstand — the tale of a man  
driven mad by his passion and love  
for a girl — even after the grave! —  
illustrated by  
rancid RICARDO VILLAMONTE!



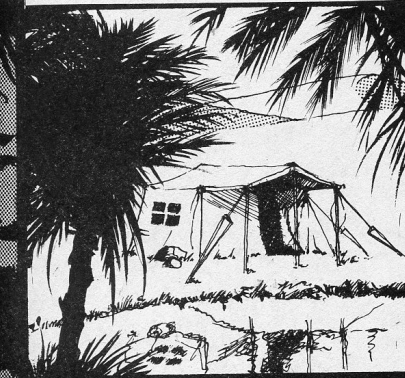


# A ROTTIN' DEAL

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY  
BRUCE JONES



THE BROILING DESERT SUN BEAT DOWN RELENTLESSLY ON THE SMALL ENCAMPMENT TENT NESTLED SECURELY BESIDE THE SHIMMERING OASIS. WITHIN ITS CANVAS CONFINES THE OLD MAN'S VOICE BROKE THE HEAVY SILENCE OF THE WASTELANDS.



FELIX TOWNSEND PULLED THE HEAVY DESERT BOOTS ON WITH A GROAN AND ADDRESSED HIS YOUNG NEPHEW PETER WITH AN AGED SMILE...



ACCORDING TO THE MAP THAT OLD PROSPECTOR SOLD ME, THE MINE IS ABOUT FIVE DAYS JOURNEY FROM HERE!

YOU SENILE OLD GOAT. ANY FOOL KNOWS THAT "LOST MINE" ROUTINE IS THE OLDEST CON GAME IN THE WORLD...AND YOU PAID FIFTY BUCKS FOR THE MAP...



THE AGING UNCLE'S WRINKLED HAND OPENED HIS FIELD JACKET AND PATTED THE SHEATH OF PAPERS IN ITS LINING. HE NODDED AT PETER...

YOU'VE BEEN GOOD COMPANY TO AN OLD MAN THESE LAST FEW YEARS, PETER. I'M SHOWING MY APPRECIATION BY REMEMBERING YOU IN MY WILL!

MAP OF REGION

PETER STARED HUNGRILY AT THE PAPERS. HE'D WAITED MONTHS JUST TO HEAR THOSE WORDS. THE LONG HOURS OF BOREDOM WITH HIS UNCLE HAD PAID OFF...

OUR JOURNEY WILL BE MADE ON **FOOT**, PETER. THE TERRAIN IS TOO **ROUGH** FOR ANY VEHICLE.

THE WATER HOLES ARE **SPACED** ALMOST EXACTLY A DAY APART! WE HAVE **ONE** CANTEEN A PIECE. BE SURE TO **RATION** YOUR WATER ACCORDINGLY...

I'M DYING! HAVEN'T HAD A DRINK IN **THREE HOURS**... C-CAN'T MAKE IT!

GET UP, BOY! WE CAN'T STOP NOW! I TOLD YOU TO **CONSERVE** YOUR WATER...

THERE...UP AHEAD! IT'S THE **FIRST OASIS!**





SO IT WENT. AT THE END OF EACH SCORCHING DAY A SHIMMERING POOL OF LIFE-GIVING WATER LAY WAITING FOR THEIR THIRSTY BELLIES AND EMPTY CANTEENS. BY THE TIME THEY REACHED THE THIRD OASIS, PETER'S PATIENCE AND STRENGTH WERE WEARING THIN...

WHY SHOULD I WAIT?  
I'LL BE AN OLD MAN  
MYSELF BY THE TIME HE  
KICKS THE BUCKET. IF  
I PLANNED IT **RIGHT**  
IT WOULD LOOK LIKE  
AN **ACCIDENT!**

IS THAT  
YOU, NEPHEW--  
**UHHH!**

WHO  
ELSE YOU  
STUPID OLD  
FOOL!

PETER!  
WHY?...

BECAUSE  
I'M **TIRED**  
OF WAITING,  
UNCLE  
FELIX!

HIS **CANTEEN!**

PETER STRUCK THEN, AGAIN  
AND AGAIN WITH THE JAGGED  
ROCK, UNTIL THE CLEAR DESERT  
POOL MUDDIED CRIMSON AND  
THE OLD MAN'S LIFE EBBED  
AWAY IN A FEEBLE TRAIL OF  
BUBBLES. A BRIGHT GLINT OF  
METAL WINKED AT PETER FROM  
BENEATH THE RIPPLING SURFACE.

PETER REACHED DOWN AND LIFTED THE  
SHINY RECEPTACLE FROM THE QUIET FORM...

YOU WON'T **NEED** THIS NOW,  
UNCLE, AND IT'LL MAKE THE  
RETURN TRIP **TWICE** AS  
**EASY** ON ME!

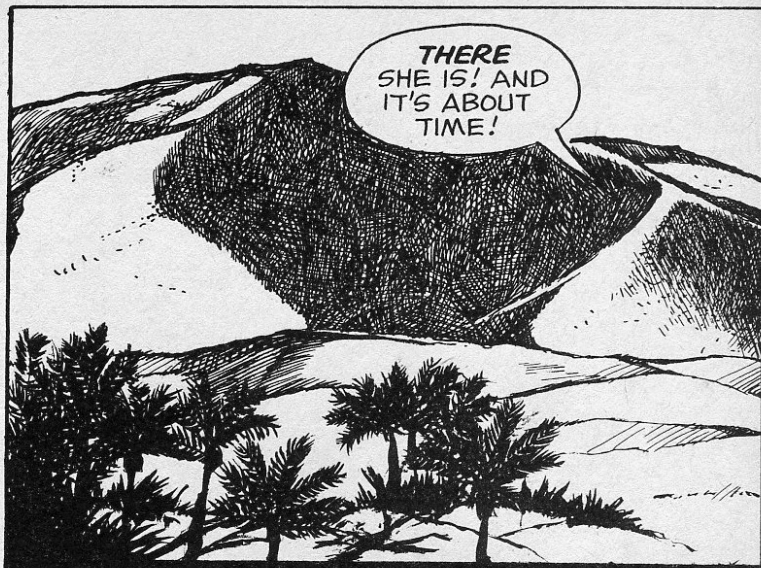


BY MID-AFTERNOON OF THE NEXT DAY PETER WAS GREEDILY EMPTYING HIS OWN CANTEEN INTO HIS DUSTY GULLET. IT SEEMED TWICE AS HOT NOW AS THE DAY BEFORE...

BLASTED  
HEAT! GOOD  
I'VE GOT  
PLENTY OF  
WATER!



THERE  
SHE IS! AND  
IT'S ABOUT  
TIME!

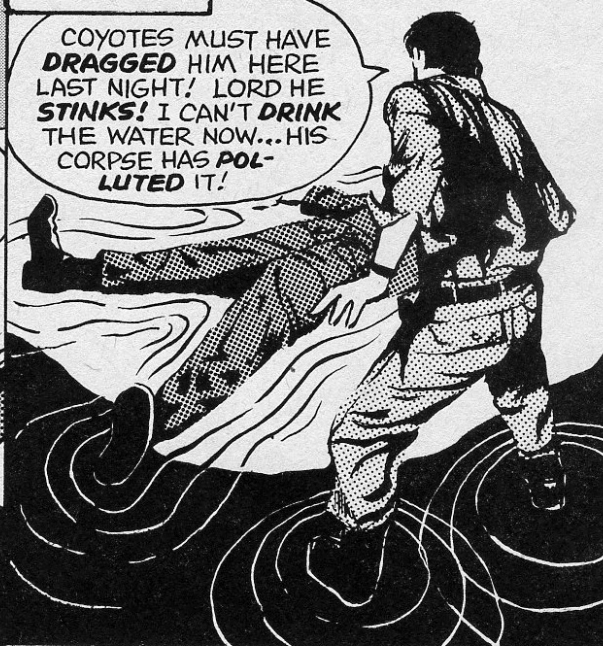


THE COOLING WATER HAD ALMOST TOUCHED HIS LIPS WHEN SOMETHING CAUGHT HIS ATTENTION FROM THE CENTER OF THE OASIS. THE BLOATED PULPY FIGURE BOBBED TO THE SURFACE AND STARED HIDEOUSLY AT HIM WITH SIGHTLESS EYES...PETER SCREAMED...

UNCLE FELIX!  
MY GOD! HOW IN  
THE NAME OF HADES  
DID HE GET HERE?



COYOTES MUST HAVE  
DRAGGED HIM HERE  
LAST NIGHT! LORD HE  
STINKS! I CAN'T DRINK  
THE WATER NOW...HIS  
CORPSE HAS POL-  
LUTED IT!



I'VE STILL GOT HIS  
CANTEEN! I CAN MAKE  
IT ON THAT!...TRAVEL BY  
NIGHT! YOU OLD VULTURE...  
I'M NOT LICKED YET!





SO HE WALKED INTO THE FREEZING DESERT NIGHT, HIS UNCLE'S CANTEN SWINGING BESIDE HIM. BY SUNRISE THE LAST OF THE PRECIOUS WATER HAD PASSED OVER HIS PARCHED LIPS ...HE SEARCHED THE HORIZON DESPERATELY!



THAT'S IT!  
I'D BETTER BE  
ON THE RIGHT  
TRAIL!



THE OASIS!  
THERE IT IS!



NO!

THE REEKING SLIME-COVERED HEAD FLOATED LAZILY IN THE WATER, ITS ROTTEN FLESH FILLING THE DESERT AIR WITH STOMACH-CHURNING ODOR, TAINTING THE COOL LIQUID AROUND IT WITH PUTRESCENCE. PETER SHUDDERED, CHOKING BACK HIS VOMIT...

HIS HEAD BEGAN TO SWIM AS THE GROTESQUE FACE DANCED BEFORE HIM, GRINNING IDIOTICALLY...



THIS CAN'T  
BE HAPPENING! I'M  
GOING MAD FROM  
THIRST! THAT'S IT!  
HE'S A MIRAGE!

BUT INSIDE, HE KNEW THE HIDEOUS THING IN THE OASIS WAS AS REAL AS THE DUST ON HIS SWOLLEN TONGUE. HE WIPED THE SWEAT FROM HIS FOREHEAD WITH A SHAKING HAND AND TURNED BACK TOWARD THE DESERT...



GOT TO MAKE  
IT TO THE LAST  
WATER HOLE BEFORE  
HE GETS THERE...  
GOT TO BEAT HIM!



WEAK WITH THIRST AND EXPOSURE, PETER STRUGGLED DESPERATELY FOR THE ENCAMPMENT TENT MILES AWAY AND THE FINAL OASIS BESIDE IT. MERCIFULLY THE SKY DARKENED, BLOTING OUT THE SUN. THEN TO HIS HORROR HE REALIZED IT WAS A...



SAND STORM!  
I'LL BE BURIED  
OUT HERE!

HE SQUINTED INTO THE HOWLING GALE AND DREW CLOSER TO THE STUMBLING FIGURE. FROM OUT OF THE SWIRLING STORM LOOMED THE HORRID MUTILATED FACE...



PETER FASTENED HIS BANDANA ABOUT HIS FACE AND PUSHED INTO THE BLINDING, WHIRLING SAND. IT WAS THEN HE NOTICED THE DIM SILHOUETTE MOVING ALONG BESIDE HIM...



SOMEONE'S  
OUT THERE!

THE ROTTED TEETERING THING WAS KEEPING PACE WITH HIM, CHUNKS OF DECAYING FLESH AND MAGGOTY BONE FALLING FROM ITS STUMBLING HULK, LEAVING A TRAIL OF RANCID GORE BEHIND IT...

UNCLE FELIX!!  
CHOKE! HE'S TRYING  
TO BEAT ME TO  
THE WATER!



PETER DROVE HIMSELF ON THE QUAKING LEGS, A COLD FEAR CLUTCHING HIS HEART...



CAN'T LET  
IT WIN!..GOT TO  
OUTDISTANCE  
HIM!



SEEMINGLY YEARS LATER THE STORM ABATED. PETER, CRAWLING ON BLOODED HANDS AND KNEES, GAZED ABOUT HIMSELF DELIRIOUSLY...

WAS IT AN HALLUCINATION?  
DID I JUST IMAGINE--  
WHAT'S THIS? TRACKS!  
GOD, IT'S AHEAD  
OF ME!

WITH A STRENGTH BORN OF MADNESS, PETER PUSHED UP AND HOBBOLED AFTER THE GRISLY TRAIL LEFT BY THE THING. MILES LATER HE FOUND IT, TRUDGING RELENTLESSLY ON, FILLING THE ACRID AIR WITH ITS STENCH...

IT HASN'T REACHED  
THE OASIS YET!

THE LAST OF HIS WILL FADING, PETER SCRAMBLED CRAZILY ACROSS THE BURNING SAND, PASSED THE GRINNING HORROR, AND FELL HEADLONG INTO THE RELIEF-GIVING POOL...

SCOOPING FRANTICALLY WITH TORN FINGERS HE FILLED HIS ACHING STOMACH WITH THE COOLING LIQUID UNTIL HIS GUTS BURNED AND LUNGS BEGGED FOR AIR... THEN HE LAY GIGGLING QUIETLY...

HEH-HEH-HEH!

THERE WAS A NOISE BEHIND HIM, SHUFFLING OF DRY DECAYED FEET. PETER TURNED IN TIME TO SEE THE CORPSE OF HIS UNCLE TOPPLE INTO THE OASIS...

HA-HA! I WON,  
YOU BLOATED HORROR!  
I'VE HAD MY DRINK  
ALREADY...HEH-HEH...  
I BEAT YOU!



REVIVED NOW, FLUSHED WITH VICTORY, PETER WALKED ON UNSTEADY LEGS TO THE SHADE OF THE TENT AND THREW OPEN THE FLAP. IT TOOK A MOMENT FOR HIS EYES TO ADJUST THEMSELVES TO THE DARKNESS WITHIN, THEN HE ENTERED...

WITH SHAKING FINGERS HE WITHDREW THE SHEATH OF PAPERS FROM THE OLD MAN'S JACKET AND OPENED IT...

AT LAST... ALL MINE!...

WHA...THIS ISN'T A WILL... IT'S A MEDICAL REPORT!

**LAVERNE RESEARCH**

MR. FELIX TOWNSEND  
428 CHIPAWA LANE  
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

DEAR MR. TOWNSEND:

THIS IS TO CONFIRM EARLIER PROGNOSIS OF YOUR CONDITION. AFTER EXTENSIVE TESTING OUR FINDING INDICATE MARKED EVIDENCE OF HANSEN'S DISEASE WHICH YOU CONTRACTED SOME MONTHS AGO

LEPROSY!  
HIS CANTEEN!  
I...I DRANK FROM HIS--

--C...CANTEEN...

AGGH-H-HH!

ACM  
LOTION

The END



# Let the Dreamer Beware





SOME PEOPLE ARE CURSED  
WITH LEPROSY...

HE IS PAYING  
BITTERLY FOR  
THE SINS OF  
A HUNDRED  
REINCARNATIONS!

I BEG  
YOU...  
ALMS...

KEEP  
AWAY!



IT IS WHISPERED THAT A  
CERTAIN UNFORTUNATE MAN  
EXISTS WHO IS CURSED BY  
HAVING BEEN BORN WITH  
**HORNS...**

DO YOU STILL  
LOVE ME, NOW  
THAT YOU KNOW  
MY **SECRET?**

GET OUT  
OF MY SIGHT.  
FOREVER, YOU--YOU  
SPAWN OF SATAN!



NOW MEET ALEX NIMBO WHO IS  
AFFLICTED WITH ONE OF THE MOST  
LOATHSOME MALADIES THAT EVER  
BESET MORTAL MAN--A LAZY,  
**NAGGING WIFE...**

IF YOU THINK I'M  
GOING TO DO HOUSE-  
WORK FOR A NOBODY  
LIKE YOU, YOU'RE CRAZY!  
SCRAPE THAT FLOOR  
AND GIVE IT **THREE**  
COATS OF VARNISH!

VILE, SOUR-  
MOUTHED  
SLAVE-  
DRIVER!



OFTEN WHEN ALEX CAME HOME LATE FROM  
HIS STRENUOUS JOB AT THE PAPER MILL...

YOU MEAN, I'M  
NOT GOING TO HAVE  
A **HOT** MEAL?

YOU CAN HEAT  
THAT CAN OF  
SARDINES FOR  
ALL I CARE!

YOU GOT HANDS!  
OPEN THE CAN!  
YOU GOT TEETH?  
EAT WHAT'S IN IT!



AND WHEN ALEX SWALLOWS HIS PRIDE AND SEEKS EVEN  
A CRUMB OF AFFECTION...

I'M A MAN WITH NORMAL  
PHYSIOLOGICAL URGES, AND  
I WANT...UH...

**THIS** IS WHAT  
YOU'LL GET...



FLORENCE, I CAN'T  
GO ON LIKE THIS  
MUCH LONGER!

MAYBE IT WOULD  
BE BETTER FOR  
**BOTH** OF US TO  
GET A DIVORCE!

YOU AIN'T GETTIN'  
NO DIVORCE  
OUTTA ME, MISTER!  
YOU EARN TOO  
LITTLE TO PAY  
MUCH ALIMONY!

AND IF YOU  
THINK I'M  
GONNA WORK  
TO SUPPORT  
MYSELF WHEN  
I GOT YOU  
WHERE I WANT  
YOU, YOU'RE CRAZY!



**SPIT!**





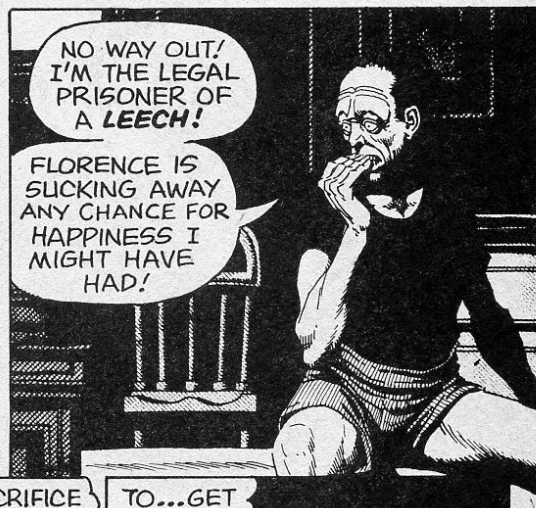


IF YOU DARE MENTION **DIVORCE** TO ME AGAIN, I'LL HAVE ONE OF MY BROTHERS BREAK EVERY BONE IN YOUR STUPID BODY!

AND YOU KNOW WHICH BROTHER I MEAN--PHIL, WHO JUST GOT OUT OF THE ASYLUM!

PHIL LIKES... **HURTING PEOPLE!**... I--CAN'T--STAND--PAIN...

SLEEP IS SLOW IN COMING TO THE TRAPPED, EMBITTERED HUMAN BEING KNOWN AS ALEX NIMBO...



NO WAY OUT! I'M THE LEGAL PRISONER OF A **LEECH!**

FLORENCE IS SUCKING AWAY ANY CHANCE FOR HAPPINESS I MIGHT HAVE HAD!



I'M HUMAN! I HAVE A RIGHT TO **REAL LOVE**...



IF ONLY I COULD FIND IT...



SOMEWHERE... ANYWHERE... I'D...



I'D SACRIFICE ANYTHING...



TO...GET IT...

AS BODILY WEARINESS FORCES HIS RESENTMENTS TO DWINDLE, ONLY ALEX'S INTENSE ROMANTIC YEARNINGS REMAIN, AS SLEEP...TAKES...OVER...



A MINI-INSTANT LATER, ALEX IS AFLOAT AMIDST AN EPHEMERAL WORLD OF SENSE-DAZZLING BEAUTY...

EVERYWHERE... ABOUT ME--LOVELINESS THAT THRILLS AND INSPIRES...

PERMEATING ALL... A SUBTLE, SUBLIME FRAGRANCE THAT ENCHANTS AND EXPANDS THE SENSES! SOOTHING AWAY ALL PSYCHO-NEUROTIC SYMPTOMS...

MY HEART--MY SOUL--ARE EXPERIENCING AN ALMOST **EXPLOSIVE JOY!**

BORN ALONG BY A MYSTICALLY VIBRANT CURRENT, ALEX RAPTLY OBSERVES MORE DELIGHTS...



EVERYONE IS RADIANTLY ATTRACTIVE! I SENSE THESE BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE **WANT** ME HERE WITH **THEM!**



AND AS THE STRANGE CURRENT WHISKS ALEX ALONG EVER-MORE-SWIFTLY...

I SENSE I'M BEING TRANSPORTED SOMEWHERE FOR SOME VERY SPECIAL PURPOSE!

EVEN IF THIS IS ONLY A DREAM... I LOVE EVERY MARVELOUS INSTANT OF IT! BUT WHERE AM I GOING? AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

ABRUPTLY, ALEX'S FORM HALTS HOVERING BEFORE A GIGANTIC, EXOTIC BEAUTY...

I WHO AM KNOWN AS **DILEETH** HAVE BEEN WAITING EONS FOR YOU, ALEX NIMBO! I KNOW THE FULL POWER AND MAGNIFICENCE WHICH HAS BEEN REPRESSED WITHIN YOU TOO LONG!

AND AS THE EXPANDED ALEX SOON EQUALS THE GIANTESS IN STATURE... I HAVE HUNGERED... YEARNED... FOR YOU FOR UNTOLD ETERNITIES!

I LOVE YOU, ALEX! SUPREMELY! TOTALLY!

NO MORE QUESTIONS! HERE IN THIS EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL PLANE... YOU AND I SHARE A CHARISMATIC LOVE SO RARE... SO INFINITE... THAT WE WILL BE THE ENVY OF THE DIMENSIONAL DEITIES THEMSELVES!

YES, **DILEETH**-- YES!!

I'M... ENLARGING!

BUT WHY ME? THERE ARE SO MANY MEN IN THIS... ER... DREAM WORLD HANDSOMER THAN ME!

THEN THE VIBRATORY CURRENT WHICH HAD BRIEFLY DWINDLED, RESUMES ITS INTENSITY AND SNATCHES ALEX AWAY...

HELP ME REMAIN HERE! I BEG YOU, **DILEETH**!

NAME THE PRICE...

BUT, IF I MURDER HER, THE LAW OF MEN WILL EXECUTE ME FOR THE CRIME!

NO! NO! I'M BEING TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU! I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE YOU EVER!

YOU CAN RETURN, FOR TIME WITHOUT END, IF YOU DARE PAY THE PRICE...

THE PRICE IS ABSURDLY SMALL! KILL THE FOUL-MOUTHED HARRIDAN, YOUR WIFE, FLORENCE!

NOT SO, BE-LOVED! ONCE THE DEED IS DONE... JUST DOZE OFF... AND YOU SHALL BE TRANSPORTED BACK TO THIS DOMAIN TO THE WAITING ARMS OF **DILEETH**!

I'LL DO IT!!



A SPIT-INSTANT AFTERWARD, ALEX OPENS HIS EYES TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF A HATEFULLY SHRIEKING VOICE...

SERVE ME BREAKFAST IN BED YOU DUMBHEAD YOU!

AND USE THAT DEODORANT I MADE YOU BUY! YOU **STINK!**

FOR ONCE, ALEX ENJOYS OBEYING ONE OF FLORENCE'S COMMANDS...

UGH! WHAT MAKES THIS GARBAGE TASTE SO AWFUL!

QUITE POSSIBLY, THE RAT-POISON I ADDED...

**GASP!** I'LL TELL THE POLICE EVERYTHING--ON THE PHONE! YOU'LL **BURN** FOR THIS, YOU LOUSY ROTTEN... MURDERER... AAARGHH...

SHE'LL BE DEAD QUICKLY!

NO FUSS, NO WORRY, ABOUT WHAT THE LAW WOULD DO TO ME! AFTER I SWALLOW A FEW OF THESE SLEEPING PILLS...

I'LL BE IN THAT GLORIOUS DREAM-WORLD... REUNITED WITH DEAR LILEETH FOREVER AND EVER AND EVER...

THE PILLS DOWNED, NIMBO'S TRANSITION TO THE SLUMBER-DIMENSION OCCURS WITH STARTLING ABRUPTNESS...

WHY ARE THEY SMILING AT ME SO PECULIARLY? LIKE CATS-- AT A MOUSE?!

**THUDD!**

S-SDDENLY EVERYTHING IS **CHANGING!** THE ATTRACTIVE STRUCTURES ARE DEGENERATING INTO DECAYING, MOULDY, SLIME-DRENCHED RUINS! THE INCREDIBLY HANDSOME PEOPLE...

ARE BEING ALTERED INTO **UNHOLY MONSTROSITIES!**

AND **LILEETH!** SHE'S B-BEING TRANSFORMED INTO A REPULSIVELY GHASTLY OLD CRONE!

COME CLOSER, LOVERBOY! KISS MY DECAYING LIPS BEFORE I **TASTE** HEE-HEE--YOUR **JUGULAR VEIN!**

**GREEE-YAAH!** THEY'RE **DEMONS** WHO DISGUISED THEMSELVES INTO LOOKING BEAUTIFUL...

...TO TRICK ME INTO DOING THEIR **EVIL WILL!**

I-I'VE GOT TO GET **OUT** OF THIS DREAM-WORLD OF HORROR, BACK TO THE NORMAL WORLD OF THE **LIVING!**





I'LL ESCAPE THE DEVILISH TRAP OF THESE GRISLY ABOMINATIONS!

THAT DAZZLING CIRCLE OF BRILLIANCE DIRECTLY AHEAD IS SOME KIND OF DOORWAY BETWEEN TWO WORLDS!



HA, HA, I GOT AWAY! YOU VILE CREATURES WILL NEVER GET ME!

UNTIL...YOU SLEEP AGAIN! WE SHALL BE WAITING-- ACCURSED FOOL!

ALEX'S AWAKENING WAS ACCOMPANIED BY AN EQUALLY RAPID IMPRISONMENT!



CONFESS...YOUR NEIGHBORS HEARD YOUR WIFE YELLING SHE WOULDN'T ACCEPT YOUR DEMAND FOR DIVORCE!

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE!

BUT DAMNING!

BUT WITH THE ARRIVAL OF NIGHTFALL, ALEX'S COMPOSURE CRACKS...



THE DREAM DEMON'S THREAT...

GIVE ME LOTS OF COFFEE! I MUST STAY AWAKE!

SHADDUP! WE DON'T CATER TO MURDERERS!

ALEX'S CONTINUED CLAMOR EARNS HIM A SESSION WITH THE PRISON DOCTOR...



JUST GIVE ME SOME PEP PILLS SO I'LL STAY AWAKE!

I TELL YOU DREAM DEMONS ARE WAITING TO SEIZE ME IF I DOZE OFF!

YOU'RE PROBABLY PLANNING A SUICIDE ATTEMPT! REQUEST REFUSED!



SHORTLY, BACK IN HIS CELL...

HE'S BANGING HIS HEAD AGAINST THE WALL AGAIN-- TO KEEP HIM AWAKE, HE SAYS!

HE PROBABLY PLANS TO COP AN INSANITY PLEA!



SOON AT THE PRISON COMMISSARY...

TRYING TO JAB A FORK INTO YOUR WRIST, HUH? FROM NOW ON, YOU EAT WITH YOUR FINGERS!

I'M NOT ATTEMPTING SUICIDE! I'M GETTING DROWSIER, BUT I DON'T DARE FALL ASLEEP!



PRESENTLY  
LOCKED UP  
AGAIN...

THERE ARE  
INDESCRIBABLE  
HORRORS LURK-  
ING IN THE  
DREAM DIMENSION,  
YOU DAMNED  
SWINE!

I NEED  
**COFFEE**  
TO STAY  
AWAKE!

THEY'RE  
IGNORING  
ME! THE  
RATS!

NIMBO'S FRENZIED EFFORT TO REMAIN  
AWAKE IS A LOSING BATTLE! HIS BLOOD-  
SHOT, WEARIED EYELIDS KEEP DROOP-  
ING LOWER...AND LOWER YET...

RESISTANCE...  
DWINDLING--SLEEP  
--CREEPING IN--  
WHILE **DEMONS**  
WAIT...

ABRUPTLY, ALEX IS AGAIN  
IN THE REALM OF THE  
ABOMINABLE NIGHTMARE...

TH-THE NAUSEATING  
EXCRESCENCES...  
SLITHERING YAMMER-  
INGLY IN AT ME!

HE IS  
**OURS!**

LOVER BOY DOES  
NOT SEEM PLEASED  
TO SEE HIS  
ADORED...HEE-HEE-  
HEE...**DILEETH!**

INTO THE **POOL**  
WITH THE FOOL!

SONS OF  
CORRUPTION!  
YOU **TRICKED**  
ME INTO THIS  
FATE!

HUR HUR  
LISTEN TO THE  
WHINING MURDERER!  
A TYPICAL HOMO  
SAPIENS  
RETROGRADE!

INTO THE **ACID**  
**POOL** WITH THE  
CARRION!

**ACID?**

NEXT MORNING, IN THE CELL OF  
PRISONER ALEX NIMBO...

THIS IS NUTS!  
THERE'S NOTHING  
HERE BUT THAT  
**SKELETON!** IT'S  
GOT NO CLOTHING  
...NO FLESH...

AND THAT EVIL,  
ACRID ODOR FROM  
THE **SKELETON**  
SMELLS EXACTLY  
LIKE...

**ACID!**

**YUUUUURGH!**

END





FUJITAKE '71

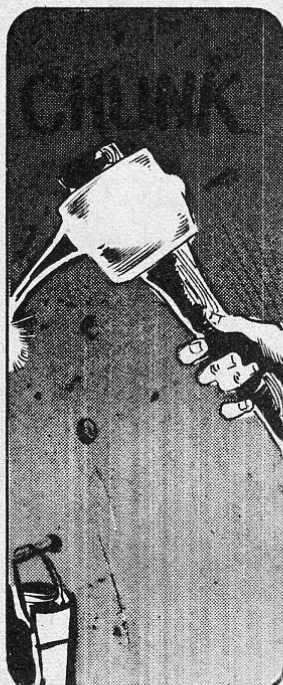
THE STEEL GATE SLAMS SHUT AND THE TINKLING LAUGHTER OF THE KEYS FADES WITH THE RECEDING LIGHT! YET, THERE IS NO FEAR OR REMORSE ON THE SILENT, MIRTHLESSLY SMILING COUNTENANCE OF THE INFAMOUS BARON! YOU SEE, HE HAS INSURED HIS SAFETY WITH AN UNEXPECTEDLY IRONIC MEANS OF...



# ESCAPE

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY DENNIS FUJITAKE

THERE ARE STILL THOSE WHO CAN BE HAD FOR **GOLD** AND IT IS WITH **THEM** I WILL **ESCAPE!** AND...



**THERE!** IT WILL BE ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE MY LACKEYS REACH ME! **GREED** IS INDEED A MOTIVATOR!





A METHODICAL CHUNK, CHUNK, CHUNK,  
REVERBERATES IN THE MUSTY DUNGEON  
THRU THE NIGHT UNTIL...

CHUNK CHUNK CHUNK C

MMPH! DIRT... THEY'RE NEARLY  
THROUGH! HAH! *VENGEANCE*  
WILL SOON BE *MINE!*

HURRY, YOU  
FOOLS, *HURRY!*  
HA, HA, HA, HA!

WHAT JUSTICE!  
THEY NEVER EVEN  
SUSPECTED! HA,  
HA, HA, CHORTLE!  
JUSTICE!

SHOOK

HA, HA, HA!  
MY REVENGE  
WILL BE TRULY  
SWEET  
JUSTICE! *MY*  
JUSTICE  
WILL BE MET!

HA, HA, HA, AND  
NOW... NO... GOD,  
*NO... URK!*

CHUNK

ME, LORD?  
ME, LORD?

THE  
END



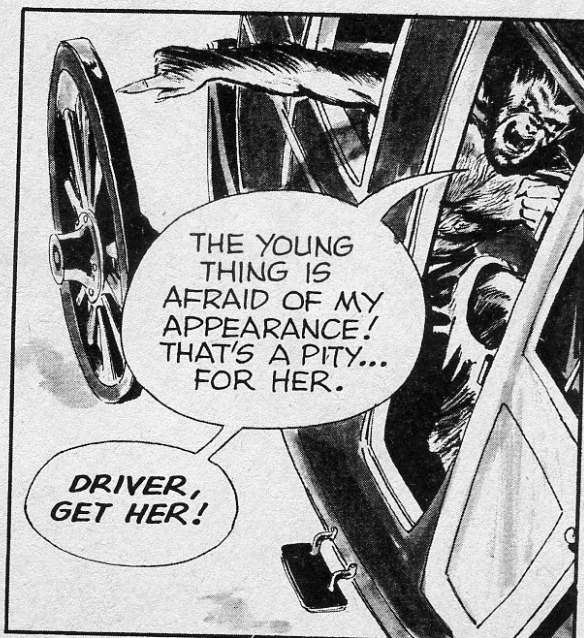
# WHENCE STALKED THE WEREWOLF

WRITTEN BY LEN BROWN ILLUSTRATED BY CARLOS GARZON

THE SHRILL SCREAM OF AN ANGRY WOMAN  
PIERCED THE CHILLY LONDON AIR! SURVIVAL OF  
THE FITTEST WAS THE LAW ON THE SEAMY SIDE  
OF THE CITY AND WITH THE THE WOMEN OF THE  
NIGHT WERE AT ODDS!



THERE'S NO RESPONSE FROM THE RIDER. NOT WISHING TO LOSE A POTENTIAL CUSTOMER, THE YOUNG WOMAN LEANS INTO THE CARRIAGE, DISPLAYING MORE THAN A CASUAL CHARM.







THE FRIGHTENED GIRL FLEES, HER PANIC DRIVES HER INTO A BLIND ALLEY!

NO! NO!  
PLEASE! HAVE MERCY,  
PLEASE! YAAA-AAHH!

1971! THE OFFICE OF DR. ALLAN BUND, WHOSE STARTLING NEW TECHNIQUES IN PSYCHO-THERAPY HAVE MADE HIM A MOST CONTROVERSIAL FIGURE.

AND I WATCHED TRIUMPHANTLY FROM INSIDE THE CARRIAGE, AS THE HORSE'S **HOOF**S MADE FAST WORK OF THE TRAMP!

INCREDIBLE STORY, DR. BUND! BUT SURELY IT'S SOME SORT OF **FABRICATION**!

FABRICATION? UNDER HYPNOSIS, DR. TRACY? WHAT YOU HEARD WAS A **TRUE** EVENT IN MY PATIENT'S LIFE!

...ONLY IT TOOK PLACE DURING A **PREVIOUS** LIFETIME...ONE IN WHICH HE LIVED IN ENGLAND ALMOST **100 YEARS** AGO!

HMM...IF ALL OF THIS **WERE** TRUE, YOU'VE GOT TO REALIZE THE **DANGER** TO HIM! IF HIS CONSCIOUS MIND WERE TO KNOW OF HIS PAST MONSTROUS EXISTENCE...

DANGER, TRACY? HOW INSIGNIFICANT THAT **DANGER** BECOMES WHEN YOU REALIZE THE WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE THAT CAN BE GAINED BY THE PSYCHIATRIC COMMUNITY!

TRUE, BUT YOU **CAN'T FORGET** THIS POOR SOUL!

YOU USED TO TELL ME THAT THE INDIVIDUAL BEING WAS OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE IN THIS WORLD. NOW, YOU JUST **SCOFF** AT IT!

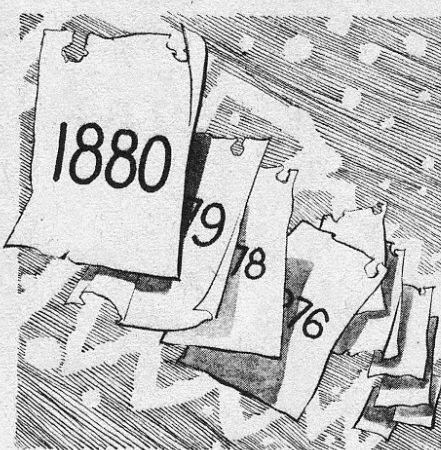


TRACY, MODERN SCIENCE STANDS WHERE IT IS IN 1971 BECAUSE OF SACRIFICES. THERE IS STILL ANOTHER SOUL TO SACRIFICE... SO WHAT!



EXCUSE ME, TRACY, I MUST GET BACK TO MY WORK. THERE IS SO MUCH TO DO!

ALONE WITH HIS SUBJECT, THE DOCTOR TRANSPORTS THE PATIENT BACK TO THE 19TH CENTURY AND LONDON...



...AND ONCE MORE THE SECRETS OF THE PAST ARE UNLOCKED!



VILLAGERS! THEY'VE TRACED THAT SLUT'S DEATH TO ME!

FIEND! OPEN THESE DOORS! WE'VE GOT A SCORE TO SETTLE UP!



EASY, JONATHAN! WE JUST CAME HERE TO TALK TO THE BLOKE. WE KNOW NOT FOR SURE THAT HE'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDERS!...ONLY THE HEARSAY OF SOME TRAMP!



THAT DEVIL IS OF NO MIND TO SHOW ANY HOSPITALITY!

FETCH SOME LARGE TIMBERS! WE'VE GOT TO GET THROUGH THESE DOORS, 'FORE HE DOES US IN!

THE ATTACK BY THE CREATURE THROWS THE CITIZENS INTO A RAGE AND INCREASES THEIR DETERMINATION.



HURRY, MAN, 'FORE HE TRIES SOME NEW TRICKS!

WE'LL TEAR DOWN THIS PLACE, BUT WE'LL GET HIM!

AYE, AND SEND HIS SOUL STRAIGHT TO HELL!

AS THE PATIENT RELATES HIS AGONIZING STORY, RELIVING THE NIGHTMARE STARTLES HIM OUT OF HIS TRANCE.



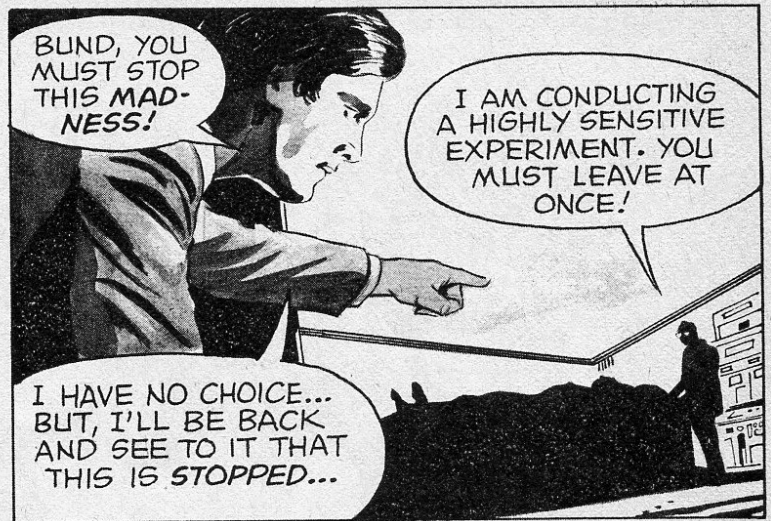
NO--NO!

EASY! A LITTLE OF THIS SHOULD RELAX YOU!





THE UNWILLING SUBJECT STARTS TO FALL BACK INTO A RESTLESS SLEEP WHEN...



THOUGH HE TRIES TO RESIST THE SUGGESTION, THE SUBJECT LOSES HIS FIGHT AND ONCE MORE LOOKS BACK UPON HIS TORTURED PAST.









I'LL FEEL **FOOLISH** IF IT'S A FALSE ALARM, OFFICER! BUT DR. BUND HASN'T ANSWERED HIS TELEPHONE FOR THE PAST THREE DAYS!

WELL, HE COULD HAVE LEFT TOWN!

NO, NOT HIM. HE WAS TOO **INVOLVED** IN A PROJECT TO GO AT THIS TIME!

PSYCHO-

THAT **SCRATCHING** SOUND...IT SOUNDS LIKE AN ANIMAL! WHAT DO YOU THINK IT **IS**?

I'M ONLY **AFRAID** TO GUESS!

THE TWO MEN ENTER DR. BUND'S PRIVATE OFFICE, UNPREPARED FOR THE SCENE OF HORROR THAT MEETS THEIR EYES...

**GOOD LORD!**

**GULP**...BUND'S **EXPERIMENTS**!...I WARNED HIM!...HE PRESSED ON AND ON AND LOOK...LOOK WHAT HE HAS **DONE**... AND LOOK AT THAT **POOR MAD FOOL**!

AND THEN...

**MAD!** OH, NO, I'M NOT MAD, MY FRIENDS! JUST A LITTLE **HUNGRY!**

The  
**END**



VITAL INFORMATION SECURED, UNDERCOVER AGENT GEORGE MARSH STALKED DOWN THE RAIN-SLICK PAVEMENTS OF THE CITY JUNGLE, INTENT ON COMPLETING THE LAST STEP OF HIS ASSIGNMENT...

AS MARSH BEGAN TO CROSS THE WET STREET, A PARKED CAR OMINOLISLY FLASHED ON ITS HEADLIGHTS--UNNOTICED BY THE PREOCCUPIED AGENT...

THE CAR ROARED TO METALLIC LIFE, AND LURCHED FROM THE CURB...

NOW THAT I KNOW A LARGE SHIPMENT OF DANGEROUS NARCOTICS IS DUE TO ARRIVE TOMORROW, THE ONLY PIECE REMAINING TO THE PUZZLE IS TO FIND OUT **WHERE...** AND MY ANONYMOUS CONFIDANT SHOULD BE ABLE TO TELL ME **THAT!**

I TOLD HIM TO MEET ME ABOUT THREE BLOCKS AWAY! STILL GOT FIFTEEN MINUTES--PLENTY OF TIME. I JUST HOPE HE **SHOWS UP** SO THIS DOPE RING **CAN BE SMASHED** ONCE AND FOR ALL!

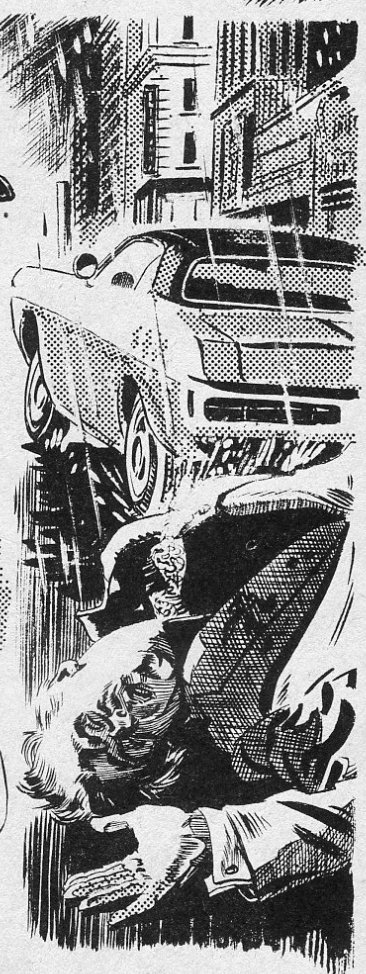
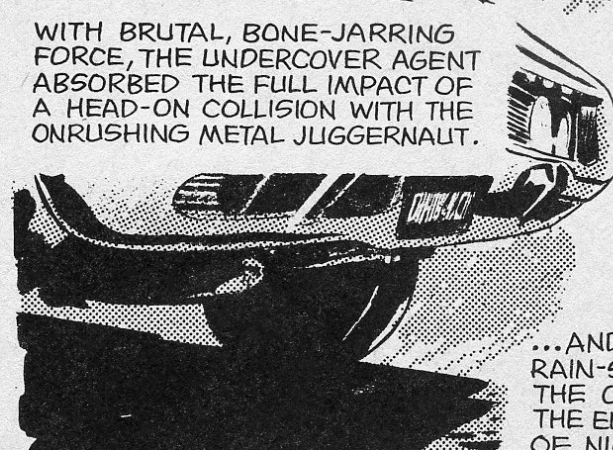


...STRAIGHT FOR THE HUMAN TARGET PINPOINTED BY THE GLARING BEAMS OF ITS HEADLIGHTS!

GOOD LORD! THAT CAR...!



WITH BRUTAL, BONE-JARRING FORCE, THE UNDERCOVER AGENT ABSORBED THE FULL IMPACT OF A HEAD-ON COLLISION WITH THE ONRUSHING METAL JUGGERNAUT.



...AND CRUMPLED TO THE RAIN-SWEPT PAVEMENT AS THE CAR SPED OFF INTO THE ENVELOPING BLACKNESS OF NIGHT.



END OF CHAPTER THREE, EH, MR. DENNING? WELL, I LIKE IT! WHY NOT FINISH IT AND IF THE REST IS AS GOOD AS THE FIRST THREE CHAPTERS, I THINK WE CAN USE IT--FLAT RATE OF THREE THOUSAND PLUS STANDARD ROYALTIES. VERY VIVID STUFF SO FAR, MR. DENNING! AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH WORDS--I GUESS IT'S THE...

# POWER of the PEN!

THANK YOU, MR. CROWLEY! GLAD YOU LIKED IT. I'LL START WORK ON THE REST TOMORROW--SHOULD BE DONE IN THREE OR FOUR MONTHS, FOLLOWING THE OUTLINE I GAVE YOU ALONG WITH THOSE THREE-SAMPLE CHAPTERS!



TERRIFIC! IF ONLY IT WAS THIS EASY TO SELL A BOOK EVERY TIME! I'M GOING TO GO STRAIGHT HOME AND PHONE GEORGE ABOUT THE GOOD NEWS!

THAT'LL BE FINE! YOU'LL BE RECEIVING AN ADVANCE IN THE MAIL NEXT WEEK OR SO!

THANK YOU, SIR. GOOD AFTERNOON.





A HECTIC CAB RIDE THROUGH THE CITY'S LATE AFTERNOON TRAFFIC SNARL FINALLY BRINGS JEFF DENNING TO HIS MODEST APARTMENT...

WAIT'LL GEORGE HEARS I USED HIS NAME FOR THE MAIN CHARACTER IN A CRIME NOVEL WHICH HAS JUST BEEN SOLD!

I THINK HALF THE FUN OF WRITING IS INJECTING ALL THE "IN" JOKES AND USING FRIENDS AS CHARACTERS IN BIZARRE SITUATIONS!

BRING!  
BRING!

HMMM... GUESS GEORGE ISN'T HOME. IT'S ODD THAT HE ISN'T--HIS WIFE USUALLY HAS DINNER PREPARED BY THIS TIME. OH WELL, I THINK I'LL GET TO WORK ON THE NEXT CHAPTER...

LET'S SEE...CHAPTER FOUR--"DEATH'S DOORWAY. GEORGE MARSH GRADUALLY AWOKE THROUGH A MISTY HAZE OF DULLED PAIN TO FIND HIMSELF HELPLESSLY CONFINED TO A HOSPITAL BED."

"ELUSIVE IMAGES DANCED BEFORE HIS UNFOCUSED VISION--THE IMAGES OF HIS WIFE AND TWO GRIM DOCTORS."

HE'S IN BAD SHAPE, MRS. MARSH. I'M AFRAID I MUST BE FRANK--HE MAY NOT PULL THROUGH!

H-HE CAN'T...D-DIE! SOB! YOU MUST DO SOMETHING! SOMETHING TO MAKE HIM LIVE...

WE'VE DONE ALL WE CAN, MRS. MARSH. IT'S NOT UP TO US ANY MORE.

CLACK!  
ACK!  
CLACK!



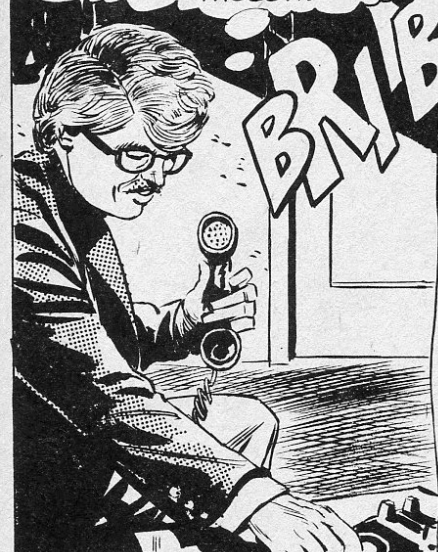


THROUGH THE CRIPPLING PAIN, MARSH THOUGHT DOGGEDLY OF ONLY ONE THING...

I'M SWORN TO SECRECY! IF ONLY I COULD TELL THEM-- TELL THEM I'M AN UNDERCOVER AGENT! IF I DIE, MY ENTIRE ASSIGNMENT WILL FAIL! IT'S BEING JEOPARDIZED FURTHER WITH EVERY MOMENT I REMAIN IN THIS BED...

OH, GEORGE, YOU CAN'T **DIE!** Y-YOU JUST CAN'T...

GUESS I'LL TRY TO GET GEORGE AGAIN--TELL HIM HE'S NEXT TO DEATH IN MY NOVEL! HA, HA! IT'S REALLY HARD TO IMAGINE GEORGE BEING AN **UNDERCOVER AGENT**, THOUGH!



**BRIBRING!**

H-HELLO? OH, HELLO, JEFF. NO, GEORGE ISN'T HERE--**SOB**--JEFF, SOMETHING **TERRIBLE** HAS HAPPENED! GEORGE WAS STRUCK BY A HIT-AND-RUN DRIVER LAST NIGHT! I JUST GOT BACK FROM THE HOSPITAL-- THEY DON'T THINK HE'LL LIVE!



YOU SAY HE'S DOWN AT MARTHA WASHINGTON HOSPITAL? I'LL GET RIGHT DOWN THERE, BONNIE! YOU JUST SIT TIGHT! I'M SURE EVERYTHING WILL TURN OUT OKAY.



THIS IS **INCREDIBLE!** GEORGE MARSH, MY FRIEND, STRUCK DOWN BY A CAR ON THE SAME NIGHT I WROTE ABOUT GEORGE MARSH, THE CHARACTER IN MY STORY, BEING HIT! IT'S ALMOST **TOO MUCH** TO BE **COINCIDENCE!**

HASTILY, THE DISTRAUGHT WRITER TAXIS TO THE HOSPITAL...





AFTER SECURING PERMISSION FROM THE DOCTORS TO SEE HIS STRICKEN FRIEND, JEFF BENNING STANDS AT THE BEDSIDE, WITNESS TO AN UNCANNY CONFESSION...

J-JEFF! THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE! I-I MUST T-TELL YOU SOMETHING BEFORE I GO...THEY SAY I'M GONNA DIE--AND IF I DO, A DANGEROUS NARCOTICS RING WILL CONTINUE TO THRIVE OFF THE MONEY OF DESPERATELY HOPELESS PEOPLE!

WHAT??! GEORGE, WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? ARE YOU DELIROUS?

NO, JEFF! I KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING! I-I'M AN UNDERCOVER AGENT... YOU'VE GOT TO CONTACT MY SUPERIORS--HAVE THEM COME HERE--OR MY DEATH WILL BE IN VAIN!

THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE! EVERYTHING I'VE WRITTEN ABOUT MY CHARACTER WITH GEORGE'S NAME HAS ACTUALLY HAPPENED TO GEORGE! GOTTA GET HOME FAST!

ALL RIGHT, GEORGE, I'LL DO IT. DON'T YOU WORRY.

THE LIFE OF HIS BEST FRIEND HANGING IN THE BALANCE, JEFF DENNING RETURNS TO HIS DEPARTMENT AND THE ONLY APPARENT MEANS OF SALVATION FOR GEORGE MARSH...

IF MY WRITING SOMEHOW GOT GEORGE INTO THIS FIX, PERHAPS IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO GET HIM OUT! EVEN THOUGH I DON'T SEE HOW IT CAN POSSIBLY WORK, I'VE GOT TO TRY IT!

FEVERISHLY, THE FRANTIC WRITER RESUMES HIS NOVEL WITH AN EFFORT NEVER BEFORE EXPENDED ON ANY OF HIS OTHER WORKS...

I LEFT OFF WITH THE SCENE IN THE HOSPITAL ROOM...SO, HERE GOES--AND IT'D BETTER WORK! WHO CAN SAY WHAT IT WAS? THE SHEER DETERMINATION OF THE TOUGH AGENT--THE STUBBORN WILL TO LIVE--OR A MIRACLE? BUT, WHATEVER, GEORGE MARSH FELT THE ROILING MAELSTROM OF CONFUSION LIFT FROM HIS MIND AS A FOG ROLLS OFF THE OCEAN...



...HIS PAIN SUBSIDED, AND HE  
KNEW HE WOULD **LIVE...**



THAT SHOULD DO IT--I  
HOPE! I STILL CAN'T  
BRING MYSELF TO BELIEVE  
THAT ALL THIS IS REALLY  
...**THE PHONE!**



NOW TO GET DOWN  
TO THE HOSPITAL AND  
SEE IF THAT WORKED  
ALSO!



NOW, IF MY HUNCH IS RIGHT, I CAN  
END THIS WHOLE BUSINESS WITH ONE  
SENTENCE! LET'S SEE...HOWEVER,  
THE INJURIES SUSTAINED IN MARSH'S  
NEAR-FATAL ACCIDENT RESULTED IN  
A CASE OF PARTIAL AMNESIA, PRE-  
VENTING HIM FROM REMEMBERING  
ANYTHING ABOUT HIS ROLE AS AN  
UNDERCOVER AGENT!



JEFF? THIS IS  
BONNIE! THE HOSPITAL  
JUST PHONED WITH  
THE MOST **WONDERFUL**  
NEWS! THE DOCTORS  
CAN'T UNDERSTAND  
HOW OR WHY, BUT  
GEORGE IS GOING  
TO **LIVE!**



OH BONNIE, WHAT  
MARVELOUS **UNEXPECTED**  
NEWS! I TOLD YOU EVERY-  
THING WAS GOING TO  
BE ALL RIGHT!

WELL, GEORGE, GLAD  
TO SEE YOU'RE  
FEELING BETTER! I...  
UH...**CONTACTED**  
THEM AS YOU ASKED  
ME TO.

**CONTACTED**  
**THEM?**  
CONTACTED WHO,  
JEFF? WHAT ARE  
YOU TALKING  
ABOUT?





GOOD! HE DOESN'T REMEMBER A THING ABOUT HIS "OTHER" LIFE! NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS CHANGE THE NAME OF MY CHARACTER TO A FICTITIOUS ONE AND I CAN FINISH THE BOOK!

UH, OUR FRIENDS, GEORGE! YOU ASKED ME TO CONTACT OUR FRIENDS AND TELL THEM ABOUT YOUR ACCIDENT!

OH, I **DID**? MUST'VE BEEN DELIRIOUS, JEFF. I DON'T SEEM TO REMEMBER--BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER! THE **IMPORTANT** THING IS THAT THE DOCTORS SAY I CAN LEAVE **TOMORROW**!

AS A RELIEVED JEFF DENNING RETURNS TO HIS APARTMENT...

WELL, I SURE AM GLAD **THAT'S** OVER WITH! THE ONLY WAY I CAN FIGURE IT IS THAT THIS WHOLE BUSINESS HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE **TYPEWRITER**!

...AND JUST SO NOTHING ELSE LIKE THIS EVER HAPPENS AGAIN--

**SPRANGG!**

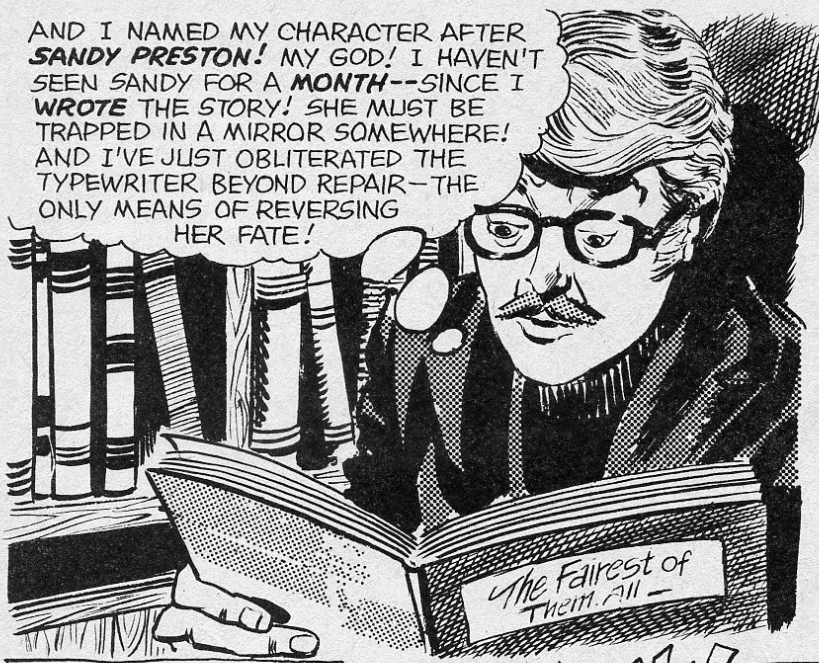
**KARASHHH!**

THAT OUGHT TO DO IT! THIS IS **ONE** TYPEWRITER THAT'LL **NEVER** WORK AGAIN!

**GOOD LORD!** I JUST REMEMBERED A FANTASY STORY I WROTE ABOUT A MONTH AGO CALLED "THE FAIREST **IN** THEM ALL" IN WHICH A BEAUTIFUL GIRL IS IMPRISONED IN A MIRROR THROUGHOUT **ETERNITY**!



AND I NAMED MY CHARACTER AFTER **SANDY PRESTON!** MY GOD! I HAVEN'T SEEN SANDY FOR A **MONTH**--SINCE I **WROTE** THE STORY! SHE MUST BE TRAPPED IN A MIRROR SOMEWHERE! AND I'VE JUST OBLITERATED THE TYPEWRITER BEYOND REPAIR--THE ONLY MEANS OF REVERSING HER FATE!



DAWNING REALIZATION SERVES TO FIRE THE WRITER INTO IMMEDIATE ACTION, AND ADDS HASTY IMPETUS TO HIS RESOLVE...

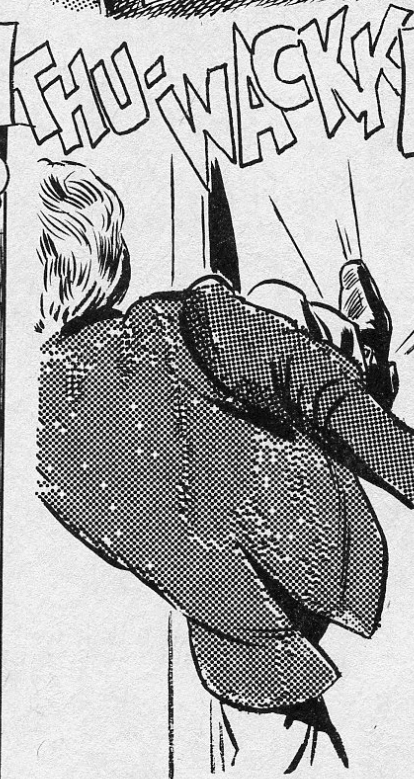


MUST GET OVER TO SANDY'S APARTMENT! NO TIME TO LOSE!

REACHING THE GIRL'S EAST SIDE APARTMENT, DENNING FINDS...



NO ANSWER! JUST AS I THOUGHT! WELL, THERE'S ONLY ONE TO **DO**--



A MONTH OF ACCUMULATED DUST COATS THE APARTMENT WITH STALE MUSTINESS, AN ATMOSPHERE WHICH COLDLY ATTESTS TO THE UTTER DESERTION OF THE PLACE...



SANDY? **SANDY!** ARE YOU HERE, SANDY?

...A DESERTION WHICH EXTENDS TO EVERY CORNER OF THE APARTMENT ... SAVE **ONE!**



THAT **MIRROR!** NO, IT CAN'T BE! BUT...BUT IT'S **TRUE!** SANDY IS...



...IMPRISONED IN THIS MIRROR! GOOD LORD! WHY DID I SMASH THAT TYPEWRITER BEYOND REPAIR?!

EVEN AS THE SHOCKED WRITER LAMENTS HIS EARLIER ACTION, A STRANGE INEXPLICABLE FORCE SEIZES HIM AND DRAWS HIM INEXORABLY, TOWARDS THE POSSESSIVE MIRROR...

SEEMINGLY WITH SENTIMENTAL MALICE, THE MYSTERIOUS MAGNETIC POWER SUCKS HIM CLOSER AND STILL CLOSER ...UNTIL THE SUPERNATURAL LOOKING GLASS BEGINS TO ENVELOPE HIM...

W-WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME? I'M BEING FORCED TO MOVE TOWARDS THE MIRROR--CAN'T CONTROL MYSELF ...CAN'T STOP!

OH, NO! I FORGOT ABOUT THE ENDING TO THAT STORY I WROTE! THE ENDING THAT SAYS...

... anyone who should attempt to rescue the cursed girl shall join her similarly in her fate of eternal imprisonment within the mirror.  
*The End*

AND ELSEWHERE, FIVE MONTHS LATER...

WHERE IS THAT DENNING? HE'S A MONTH OVERDUE ALREADY! WHY CAN'T I EVER FIND A WRITER WHO ISN'T TOO BUSY PARTYING ALL THE TIME TO MEET A DEADLINE!

*End*



WRITTEN BY ALAN HEWETSON

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM SUTTON

DEEP IN THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH IS THE FIENDISH INFERNAL ABYSS KNOWN AS... **HELL!** ETERNALLY MAN HAS LIVED IN FEAR OF DAMNATION... THAT HIS SOUL MAY BE CAST INTO EVERLASTING TORMENT AND ODIUS PANDEMONIUM! OUR TALE TAKES YOU ON A PERSONALLY GUIDED TOUR OF GROTTTO OF **HELL** ITSELF... FROM WHICH NONE HAVE EVER RETURNED... SAVE FOR ONE... THE--

## HAG OF THE BLOOD BASKET!

FRANCE, THE YEAR 1793... IN THE MIDST OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION... ONE OF THE GAUDIEST BLOODBATHS IN HISTORY. A REVOLUTION OF THE "PEOPLE" WHERE PREJUDICE HAS ITS REVENGE IN KIND... WHERE MEN, WOMEN AND EVEN CHILDREN OF NOBLE BIRTH, ARE DRAGGED IN RICKETY, LUMBERING CARTS AFTER A MOCK TRIAL, TO THEIR DEATHS AT THE BLACK HAND OF THE MERCILESS... **GUILLOTINE!**

THE **GUILLOTINE**... GLEAMING IN THE BLOOD DRENCHED STREETS OF PARIS, CUTS THE WRITHING HEADS OF ITS OFT-INNOCENT VICTIMS. MINDLESS, HEADLESS BUT ONLY FOR A FEW SECONDS... THEN THE GHASTLY DISFIGURED HEADS ROLL INTO A CRIMSON RECEPTACLE... **THE BLOODY HEAD-BASKET!**







IN THAT TIME OF  
PERSONAL VENDETTA...  
WHEN MEN USED THE  
REVOLUTION TO KILL  
THEIR PERSONAL  
ENEMIES, STARTS OUR  
TALE...AN OLD WOMAN  
IS FALSELY ACCUSED  
OF BEING A ROYALIST...  
IN REALITY SHE WAS  
BUT A SIMPLE  
PEASANT...**THE  
WOMAN WHO HELD  
THE BLOOD BASKET!**



WHY?

WHY AM I  
HERE IN COURT? I  
AM AN OLD WOMAN...  
I HAVE DONE **NOTHING**  
...I PLAY MY PART IN  
THE **REVOLUTION** WELL  
...TELL ME **WHY?**



REVOLTING OLD  
**HAG**...YOUR  
PRESENCE IS  
AN **INSULT!**

THIS COURT  
HAS **NO** PITY  
ON YOU OR  
YOUR VILE  
**KIND!**

**KIND?**  
...KIND OF  
**WHAT?**

WHY DO  
YOU **INSULT**  
**ME?**

WHAT  
HAVE  
I EVER  
DONE  
**WRONG?**



**SILENCE HAG!**  
DO NOT AFFRONT  
JUSTICE AGAIN  
WITH YOUR VILE  
**MOUTH**...YOU HAVE  
BEEN CHARGED  
BY BROTHER BENET  
OF CONSORTING  
WITH THE ACCURSED  
ARISTOCRACY...  
SAY YOUR  
**DEFENSE!**

...AND MAKE  
IT **BRIEF!**

THAT'S **INSANITY!**  
BROTHER BENET  
HAS **TRUMPED UP**  
HIS CHARGE...  
MERELY TO GET  
**RID OF ME!**

HE OWES ME  
**MUCH MONEY**...  
IF I'M DEAD HE  
WON'T HAVE TO  
**PAY ME**...I  
**SWEAR IT!**





CERTAINLY NO MERCY FROM A COURT WITH POWER DEVOID OF SANITY...AND SHE IS CONDEMNED TO BE TAKEN THE FOLLOWING DAY TO THE WAITING CLUTCHES OF THE **GUILLOTINE**...MERCILESS AND CRUEL, UNHEARING AND UNCARING...A HIDEOUS LAMPOONER OF JUSTICE!

THE EXECUTIONER STANDS BEFORE THE CROWDS OF JEERING PEASANTS, HAND GRASPING TAUGHT THE ROPE THAT HOLDS READY THE BLADE...THE CONQUERING STEEL SHAFT THAT SEVERS ANY MAN'S LIFE!

THE CROWDS LEAR AT THE CONVICTED WHO LUMBER TO THE PLATFORM FROM BLOOD-DRENCHED CARTS... CRY SHOUTS OF INSULT AND SING SONGS OF FREEDOM... DELIRIOUS IN ANTICIPATION OF THE MACABRE SLAUGHTER THAT AWAITS THEM!



FATE GLEAMS OMINOUSLY ABOVE AS THE OLD TOAD HAG WHIMPERS IN DESPAIR...LEGS GROW WEAK...HER EYES--LONG SOAKED WITH TEARS OF AGONY--ROLL, HAGGARD IN THEIR SOCKETS! AS SHE NOW FACES THE ETERNITY OF DAMNATION!





THE BLADE DROPS SUDDENLY... CUTTING THE EAR-PIERCING SCREAMS OF THE WRETCHED OLD WOMAN SPITTING HORRIBLE OBSCENITIES AT THOSE JEERING MANY WHO CONDEMNED HER TO DEATH! IN BUT A MOMENT THE UNCANNY FRENZY IS OVER. THE HEAD ROLLS, EYES POPPING FROM THEIR SOCKETS...AND THE GUTTER WELCOMES THE GROTESQUE CADAVER WITH BLOOD-SODDEN COBBLESTONES! THE TOAD HAG LIES DEAD AND DECAPITATED! THE CROWD IS HUSHED IN A MOMENT OF PRECLIMACTIC REFLECTION...





BUT DEATH COMES NOT EASILY. HER EYES REMAIN OPEN EVEN AS SHE LIES HELPLESS, IN PASSIVE AGONY AS THE FEET OF HER MURDERERS PASS HER BY...

SHE WATCHES IN TORTURE AS HER NOW LIMP AND LIFELESS FORM IS TOSSED LIKE GARBAGE FROM THE THRONE OF DEATH...AND WONDERS... PONDERES *WHY* THERE IS NOT THE NOTHINGNESS OF DEATH SHE EXPECTED...BUT A *LIFE* AFTER DEATH ...THAT PERMITS HER TO SEE, TO HEAR, TO WONDER!



MISERY AND SHOCK MUDDLE TOGETHER IN THE TOAD HAG'S MIND...THE BODY (THAT WAS ONCE HERS) SHUDDERS AND GROPEs FORWARD SEARCHING...SEARCHING FOR A HEAD. A MIND THAT THINKS, EYES THAT CAN SEE! THE HANDS FIND THEIR TARGET...AND PULL THE TEAR-PULSING HEAD BACK ...BACK TO THE SHOULDERS WHERE IT RIVETS ITSELF MIRACULOUSLY...AND THE MESS THAT WAS LIVING DEATH NOW BECOMES...AS ONE IN FORM...AND IN LIFE!







AND SOON YOU **SHALL** KNOW  
WRETCHED OLD HAG, AS  
YOU BEGIN YOUR **DESCENT**...  
YOU **SINK** INTO THE VERY  
**GROUND** ITSELF, YOU **GRASP**  
FOR SUPPORT CLUTCHING  
NOTHING BUT **AIR**...MEANING-  
LESS **AIR**... AND STILL YOU  
**SINK**...DOWN...DOWN...INTO  
THE VERY **BOWELS** OF THE  
EARTH!



THE EARTH **WELCOMES** YOU...  
CUSHIONS YOUR **DESCENT**  
AND CARESSES YOUR DECAY-  
ING BODY IN **MOCKERY**.  
YOU ARE CHOKING...AND  
SUFFER...AND CLUTCH  
YOUR THROAT **PLEADING**  
FOR **AIR**...FOR YOU CANNOT  
BREATHE...AND YET YOU  
CANNOT DIE!



AND WHERE THE GROUND--  
AND EARTH **END**...DEEP WITH-  
IN THE WORLD'S VERY **CORE**...  
YOU FALL THROUGH THE  
NOTHINGNESS THAT SURROUNDS  
YOU. GREAT MONSTROUS **BATS**  
HOVER ABOUT AND, RUDELY  
AWAKENED FROM THEIR  
SLEEP OF AGES, CRASH BLINDLY  
ABOUT YOUR HELPLESS FORM  
NOW BATTERED AND BRUISED...

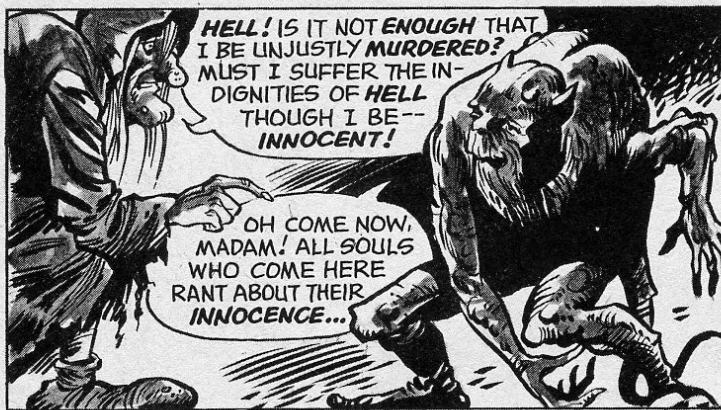


**TARTARUS WELCOMES**  
**YOU...MADAM!** I  
TRUST YOUR TRIP HAS  
BEEN AS UNCOM-  
FORTABLE AS WE  
**INTENDED** IT BE!  
I AM **VOGT**...  
EXECUTIVE  
ASSISTANT  
TO HIS  
MAJESTY  
SATHANAS!  
THIS, MADAME  
...AS YOU MAY  
HAVE  
PRESUMED...  
IS **HELL!**



AND WHEN YOU **DO** STOP  
FALLING...YOU ARE SUR-  
ROUNDED BY **NOTHING!**  
YOU SCREAM...AND NO  
ONE HEARS YOU...SAVE  
THE INCREDIBLE NIGHT-  
BIRDS OF DEATH WHO  
STIFLE THE VERY AIR YOU  
NOW BREATHE...UNTIL  
THERE APPEARS BEFORE  
YOU A VILE HUNCHED  
DWARF...CURIOUS AND  
OBSCENE...WHO SILENCES  
THE LOUD CLATTERING OF  
WINGS AND YOUR CRIES...  
AND YOU LISTEN!





HELL! IS IT NOT ENOUGH THAT I BE UNJUSTLY MURDERED? MUST I SUFFER THE INDIGNITIES OF HELL THOUGH I BE-- INNOCENT!

OH COME NOW, MADAM. ALL SOULS WHO COME HERE RANT ABOUT THEIR INNOCENCE...



...NO ONE IS INNOCENT MADAM...LEAST OF ALL YOU!

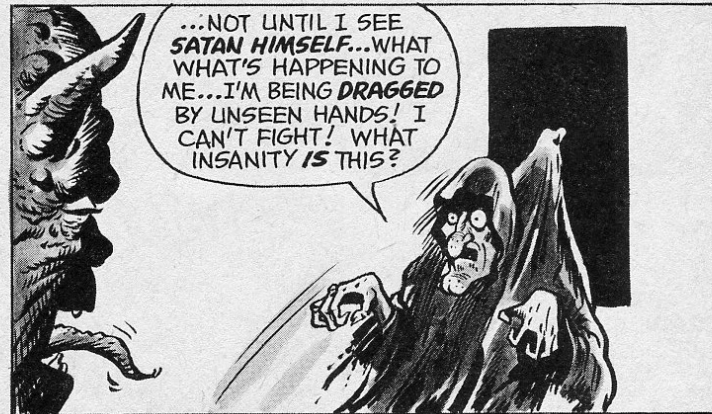
CEASE THIS CHILDISH SQUABBLE! COME TO GRIPS! YOUR LIFE HAS BEEN COMPLETE...SO DON'T START COMPLAINING TO ME NOW... I'M ONLY AN ASSISTANT!



THAT DOORWAY, MADAM...LEADS TO THE GROTTO OF TARTARUS...WHICH YOU MAY KNOW AS **THE VALLEY OF DEATH...**

NO...I'LL NOT GO ANYWHERE TILL I'VE HAD A FAIR HEARING...

WITHIN... MANY AWAIT YOU **EAGERLY** SO NOW **GO** ...OR IT'LL BE ALL THE **HARDER** FOR YOU!



...NOT UNTIL I SEE **SATAN HIMSELF...** WHAT WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME...I'M BEING **DRAWN** BY UNSEEN HANDS! I CAN'T FIGHT! WHAT **INSANITY** IS THIS?



YOU THINK YOU CAN CHEAT ME OF JUSTICE SO SIMPLY... YOU THINK YOU CAN TREAT ME LIKE SO MUCH **DIRT...** NO, **NEVER!**



BEING **DRAWN**... INTO **BEDLAM...** CAN THIS REALLY BE HAPPENING OR IS IT THAT I AM REALLY **INSANE?** THAT ALL THIS IS IN MY **HEAD!**

**WAIT!!**

LIGHT... LIGHT **AHEAD...** IT CAN ONLY MEAN...





**THE GROTTO OF HELL!**  
GROTESQUE--HORRID--UNCANNY BEYOND MORTAL IMAGINATION...WHERE THE DEAD DWELL IN AN ETERNITY OF TORTURE AND ANGUISH...WHERE FREEDOM IS BANISHED...WHERE THE INDIVIDUAL IS BUT LITERALLY A NUMBER ON A CAGE...WHERE **SATAN** RULES WITH AN IRON FIST!



**THE GROTTO OF HELL!** WHERE TIME STANDS STILL AND YET REACHES OUT IN ALL DIRECTIONS...INTO THE DEEP AND MISTY AGES OF YESTERDAY...AND FAR INTO THE WAR RIDDEN UNKNOWNNS OF TOMORROW! IT IS UNBEARABLE FOR A WOMAN SO OLD, SO FRAIL...SHE FEELS AGONY IN THE LIFELESS HEART IN THE LIFELESS SPIRITUAL BODY! YET SHE CAN SAY NOTHING...**DO** NOTHING HERE...LESS IT BE SANCTIONED BY THE DEVIL HIMSELF!



BUT WAIT...THERE ARE NO PEOPLE...**NO PEOPLE!** WHERE CAN THEY BE? IS THIS NOT A CITY...OR IS IT EXACTLY WHAT IT APPEARS TO BE...SOME KIND OF INCREDIBLE CRYPT OF THE FORGOTTEN DEAD!



I'LL FOLLOW YOU **NOWHERE** UNTIL I FIND OUT MORE...UNTIL I HAVE AN **EXPLANATION!** WHAT IS THIS PLACE? ...WHERE ARE ALL THE PEOPLE...**TELL ME...PLEASE TELL ME!**

**I**N THE GRIME AND CAKED DUST OF HELL ITSELF SATAN HIMSELF IS UNSEEN...YET HE IS ALWAYS PRESENT...ALWAYS ON THE LIPS OF EVERY DESPERATE SOUL WHO INHABITS THIS ISLE OF DAMNATION! HE IS SERVED BY MANY ASSISTANTS WHO, CONTEMPTABLE EVEN TO THEIR OWN KIND ARE HIDEOUSLY DEFORMED DEVILISH ASSISTANTS WHO HAVE SWORN THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO HATE...TERROR...DESPOTISM AND FEAR. THE TOAD HAG HAS ALREADY MET ONE SUCH GAUNT EXCUSE FOR HUMANITY...HE WHO IS CALLED...**VOGT...** NOW SHE MEETS ANOTHER...THE HAGGARD **DRAKKOS!**





YOU **WILL** COME WITH ME WHETHER YOU **WISH** TO OR NOT!

THIS IS A SPIRITUAL WORLD...YOUR **BODY**, YOUR **MIND**, YOUR VERY **BEING** IS ENTIRELY SPIRITUAL! YOU SENSE THE SAME THINGS YOU DID IN **LIFE**!

BUT DO NOT **FOOL** YOURSELF! YOU ARE **DEAD**!



BUT YOU HAVEN'T ANSWERED ME...WHERE...WHERE ARE THE PEOPLE?

THEY ARE IN THEIR...SHALL WE SAY PRIVATE ROOMS! NO ONE IS PERMITTED TO VENTURE OUT!

BUT COME, YOUR **TOUR** IS ALMOST OVER UNTIL THE **MASTER** DECIDES TO SEE YOU AND HEAR YOUR CASE...YOU MUST JOIN THE **OTHERS**...ALSO AWAITING **JUDGMENT**!

**DRAKKOS...** DENIZEN OF THE DEATH WORLD, EPITOME OF ABSOLUTE EVIL...LEADS THE BEWILDERED HAG TO HER **CAGE**...ONE IN THE MIDST OF **THOUSANDS** STACKED MILE HIGH LIKE SO MANY CARTONS IN A WAREHOUSE! THE EAR-PIERCING SHRIEKS AND CRIES OF HER FELLOWS DEAFENS HER... AND HER MISERY OVERTAKES THE NOW SUDDEN REALIZATION OF THE REALITY OF **DEATH**!



MADAM...ENTER YOUR **CAGE**... THEN AWAIT YOUR CALL BY THE **MASTER**!

YOU CAN'T PUT ME IN **THERE**...IT'S UNIMAGINABLE!



**GET IN THERE...** YOU'VE **ALREADY** BEEN ACCORDED UNPRECEDENTED PRIVILEGES... SO JUST TO GET IN **THERE** AND **SHUT UP**!



LIKE THE INFAMOUS INSTRUMENT OF MEDIEVAL TORTURE THIS UPDATED **SPIKE BOX** SERVES ITS MASTER FAR BETTER THAN ITS PREDECESSOR...FOR THIS COFFIN-- CUSHIONED FROM EVERY ANGLE BY DEEP AND BITING FOUR INCH SPIKES--IS DESIGNED TO TORTURE THE **LIVING DEAD**...THOSE WHO CANNOT PRAY FOR DEATH... THOSE WHO CAN ONLY WAIT...AND ENDURE...THE **ETERNAL AGONY**!



TIME PASSES...SLOWLY...TEARS NOW FESTER SORES IN THE OPEN CUTS IN HER FLESH... TIME HAS NO MEANING, NO SUBSTANCE...THEN SHE IS PAID A VISIT...



WELL, WOMAN...THE TIME HAS FINALLY COME FOR YOUR...AUDIENCE!



SO CONFINED HAS SHE BEEN, SO RESTRICTED IN MOVEMENT TO ONLY AN INCH HERE...AN INCH THERE...THAT SHE CAN SCARCELY MOVE! HER BONES HAVE **MOLDED** INTO A FIXED POSITION, HER LEGS WILL HARDLY MOVE...AND SO HER NEW FOUND **FREEDOM** IS NOT A **BLESSING**... BUT A **NIGHTMARE**!



COME QUICKLY...DON'T **STUMBLE**! THE MASTER AWAITS...AND HIS TIME IS VALUABLE! IF WE ARE NOT PROMPT WE WILL **BOTH** SUFFER HIS WRATH!



HERE SHE IS...MASTER! THE NEWEST ACQUISITION! HER NAME IS MADAM DU SADE!

WELCOME...WELCOME! HAS DRAKKOS SHOWN YOU OUR CHAMBER YET...HAVE YOU **DECIDED** WHAT YOU WANT?

I'VE BEEN SHOWN NOTHING...I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT A... CHAMBER...



AH WELL THEN...YOU HAVE A SURPRISE IN STORE FOR YOU...NOT A PLEASANT ONE I REGRET...BUT NEVERTHELESS A GENUINE FIRST RATE SURPRISE!



EVERY RESIDENT HAS A **PRIVATE HELL**! THE THING ONE FEARS MOST...

WITH MANY IT IS QUITE **COMMON**... RATS, SNAKES, EVEN SPIKES... THINGS OF THAT SORT! BUT WITH SOME...THE BRAND OF PUNISHMENT IS **UNIQUE**!

COME... I'LL SHOW YOU...





SORRY FOR ALL THESE  
DRAMATICS...THE CASTLE  
WALLS, THE OLD  
OAKEN DOOR...

BUT OUR...RESIDENTS  
**LIKE THIS ATMOSPHERE**  
...MAKES DEATH AND  
HELL SEEM QUITE  
COMPLETE!



THIS MAN IN LIFE  
WAS AN ARSONIST! HE  
WENT AROUND SETTING  
FIRE TO BUILDINGS,  
ANIMALS, EVEN PEOPLE  
--NOW HE'S GETTING  
HIS JUST REWARDS  
HERE IN HELL FROM  
THESE FLAME-TONGUED  
INSECTS WHO GOBBLE  
HIS FLESH!



EVERY SO OFTEN THE **RATS** GNAWING  
ON **THAT** ROPE BREAK THROUGH  
AND THAT WRETCHED WOMAN  
SUDDENLY HAS STABBING PAINS  
IN THE HEART...

...BUT IT HEALS UP QUICKLY  
...SPIRITUAL BODIES **ALL**  
HEAL QUICKLY...READY FOR  
THE **NEXT ROUND** OF  
TORTURES!



IN LIFE THAT FELLOW WAS  
A **PRACTICAL JOKER**...  
HE WENT AROUND PLAYING  
FIENDISH PRANKS ON HIS  
FRIENDS...ONE BACKFIRE  
AND HIS BEST FRIEND  
**DIED!**



HIS PUNISHMENT DOESN'T END WITH THE **HANGMAN'S**  
**NOOSE** FOR HERE HE THINKS ALL THOSE WRITHING  
HANDS AND TWITCHING FINGERS ARE HIS  
FRIENDS SEEKING THEIR **REVENGE!**

**HORRIBLE** IS IT? HA! HA!  
WOULDN'T YOU LIKE  
TO JOIN HIM?

**NO! NO! PLEASE...IN**  
**HEAVEN'S NAME NO...  
PLEASE!!**

YOU'LL PAY  
THE SUPREME  
PUNISHMENT...  
FOR EVEN  
**MENTIONING**  
THAT OTHER  
PLACE!







YOU'LL **ROT**, WOMAN...ROT  
IN **ETERNITY** TILL YOUR  
MISERABLE CARCASS  
SMELLS LIKE  
**MANURE!**

BUT I'M INNOCENT...  
I'M INNOCENT...I'VE DONE  
**NOTHING** TO DESERVE  
THIS...NOTHING...

YOU'LL PAY THE **SUPREME**  
PUNISHMENT ALL RIGHT...  
**ETERNAL LONELINESS...**



HE WOULDN'T  
**LISTEN** TO ME...  
**NO ONE** LISTENS  
TO ME HERE...

AND SO SHE IS LEFT **ALONE...** BUT TO ENDURE THE MOST **INHUMAN**  
PUNISHMENT OF **ALL...LONELINESS** AND THE BURDEN OF THE MIND!



LEFT TO ROT, HE SAYS...  
IN THIS MISERABLE  
HOLE IN THE GROUND  
SPAWNED OF THE  
DAMNATION OF  
SOLITUDE...I'LL  
GO **INSANE!**

SHE DOES NOT SEE THE **EYES** WATCHING LIKE A SILENT DEMON IN  
THE **DARKNESS!** EYES THAT ARE **CRUEL** AND WITHOUT A HUMAN  
SHRED OF **EMOTION.**



WILL YOU NOW...SUCH  
A SHAME...BUT PERHAPS  
I CAN **AID** YOU...

**VOGT...** WHERE  
DID YOU COME  
FROM...I THOUGHT  
I WAS **ALONE!**

CAN IT REALLY BE THAT THE **DEVIL** HIMSELF CAN BE **THWARTED?**  
THAT **SATAN** IS A FOOL?...THAT HIS EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT IS IN  
LIASON WITH THE FORCES OF...**GOOD?**



YOU ARE  
SUPPOSED  
TO BE ALONE  
...BUT I CRYPT  
PAST THE  
UNSEEN  
GUARDS...I  
WANT TO  
TALK WITH  
YOU!

YOU...  
TALK TO  
ME...BUT  
WHY?

BECAUSE I'M  
NOT SO HARSH  
AND UNTHINKING  
AS YOU MIGHT  
THINK...I BELIEVE  
IN YOUR **INNOCENCE**  
...AND I CAN **HELP**  
YOU GET OUT OF  
HERE...AS I HAVE  
HELPED MANY  
OTHER **INNOCENTS**  
FALSELY SUFFERING  
LIKE YOURSELF...

THERE IS A WAY  
BACK TO THE  
**EARTH'S SURFACE**  
AND **FREEDOM!**



AT LAKE AVERNUS, IN ITALY IS A CRATER LAKE, JOINED TO THE UNDERGROUND .  
STYGIAN CREEK, AN INSURMOUNTABLE  
BARRIER TO THOSE WHO WOULD ENTER  
...BUT NOT TO THOSE WHO WOULD  
LEAVE.

I WILL GIVE YOU  
DIRECTIONS TO REACH  
IT FROM HERE...BUT TO  
BE RE-UNITED WITH  
YOUR EARTH BODY...TO  
BECOME AS ONE AGAIN  
IN THE WORLD OF PHYSICAL  
BEINGS...YOU MUST KNOW  
THE UNHOLY  
INCANTATION!

ON THE SURFACE  
YOU MUST STAY  
'SATAN...MASTER  
OF NONE...SCOURGE  
TO NO ONE BUT  
HIMSELF...I HAVE  
BECOME FREED IN  
SOUL AND SPIRIT  
...I DEMAND THE  
RESTITUTION OF  
LIFE, THEN YOU  
WILL BECOME  
ONE!

VOGT WAS ACCURATE IN HIS MAPPING OF HER ROUTE...IT WOULD TAKE HER DAYS OF TIRING TRAVEL...OF ENDLESS JOURNEY! BUT IT WAS WORTH IT...IT WAS FREEDOM!

THE SPIRITUAL BODY NEEDS NO NOURISHMENT...NO FOOD OR DRINK TO KEEP IT ALIVE...BUT EVEN SO THERE IS MORTAL SUFFERING IN THE AGONIZING ENDLESS STRUGGLE FOR THE SURVIVAL OF SANITY...THE TOAD HAG RUNS INTO THE MONSTROUS BATS AGAIN WHO SEEK AFTER RAW FLESH AND COLD UNLIVING BLOOD...

AT LAST...THE LAST BARRIER...THE  
RIVER STYX...IF I CAN MAKE IT  
ACROSS WITHOUT BEING TRAPPED  
IN THE EVER ENCIRCLING MAEL-  
STROM I'LL REACH THE  
SURFACE...





WHIRLPOOL MAELSTROM...  
ALMOST DRAGGING ME IN  
...MUST KEEP FIGHTING!



AN OPENING...  
IN THE ROCK...  
MUST BE...  
**EARTH'S**  
**SURFACE**...IF  
I CAN KEEP  
FIGHTING TOWARD  
IT!



**EARTH!**...  
LIGHT...  
THE **SUN**  
STREAMING  
DOWN...IT  
FEELS GOOD  
TO BE ALIVE  
AGAIN!

AND SO IT APPEARS THAT SATAN **IS** A **FOOL**...TO BE TRICKED SO EASILY BY ONE OF HIS CHARGES! THE TOAD HAG HAS **REACHED** THE EARTH'S SURFACE...HAS ESCAPED FROM THE VERY CORE OF THE EARTH ITSELF...AND FROM THE NOW **SCOWL-ING** SATAN AS SHE UTTERS THE WORDS THAT FORCES THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS TO **FREE** HER FROM HIS **HOLD** ON HER...



NOW FOR THE  
INCANTATION...  
TO BECOME A  
**HUMAN BEING**  
AGAIN...

**SATAN**, MASTER  
OF NONE...SCOURGE  
OF NO ONE BUT HIS  
CONTEMPTABLE SELF...  
I HAVE **FOUGHT** AND  
**FREED** MYSELF IN  
SOUL AND SPIRIT...  
NOW I DEMAND MY  
**FREEDOM**...RELEASE  
MY SOUL AND GIVE  
ME LIFE!!



AND SATAN GRINS A GHASTLY SMILE, FOR HIS WORK IS DONE... HIS EVIL HAS TAKEN ROOT AND FORMED INTO THE GROTESQUE SEMI-LIFE THAT ROTS IN THE EARTH-BOUND MENTAL ASYLUM KNOWN AS **BEDLAM!**



"I WARNED HER, HER CARCASS WOULD ROT UNTIL IT SMELLED LIKE **MANURE!**" SATAN DREW DEEP A BREATH OF SATISFACTION, SHE DIDN'T BELIEVE ME, DID SHE VOGT... THAT **EVERYONE** HAS THEIR OWN PECULIAR BRAND OF **PRIVATE HELL!**"



"THEY **NEVER** BELIEVE ME!" 'AYE MASTER', SPAT THE HIDEOUS DWARF TRAITOR, 'AND **VOGT** HAS **AGAIN** SERVED YOU WELL... LETTING HER THINK SHE WAS **ESCAPING** TO FREEDOM AND UNITY WITH HER **BODY!**"



"SHE THINKS SHE IS **INNOCENT!** HAH... **INNOCENT... NO ONE** IS **INNOCENT**, VOGT... **NO ONE!** AND SO SHE SHALL SUFFER IN HER OWN **HELL...** THE HELL ON EARTH SHE CHOSE HERSELF... FOR HAD SHE NOT BEEN SO INCREDIBLY **STUPID** SHE WOULD HAVE **REMEMBERED** THAT HER BODY COULD NOT HAVE BEEN RE-UNITED WITH HER HEAD... THAT THE **GUILLOTINED** HEADS ARE **CHOPPED UP...** AND USED AS **DOG MEAT!**"



**THE END**

AND SATAN, BOWING LOW HIS GRAY DISSIMULATION, DISAPPEARED! THE TOAD HAG **LIVES...** FOR EVEN AS SATAN HAS HIS VILE BEDLAM AFTER THE GRAVE... WE ON EARTH-SIDE HAVE OUR OWN BEDLAM... THE ASYLUM FOR THE INCURABLY **INSANE!** AND IS THERE MAN ALIVE WHO WOULD DARE TO QUESTION THAT THE NOTORIOUS TOAD HAG OF **PARIS DU COMITÉ REFORME** IS CURABLE?... FOR THE WRITHING IDIOT CHAINED TO BEDLAM IS HEADLESS... AND DECAPITATION IS INCURABLE!



# THE SAGA OF THE VICTIMS

...WITH  
**CROSSES!**

**YAAAAAAA**

LORD...  
LOOK AT  
HIM!

...FLESH  
AND BONE IS  
GROWING ON HIM...  
NATURE IS TWISTING  
EVERYTHING INTO  
REVERSE...

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